

NEPALESE MINIATURES

Rajatananda Das Gupta

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

In the field of Indology, which is so vast and expansive, we have concentrated our efforts, and since our very inception we are trying our best, to serve our readers and scholars, by bringing out new and impressive books on Art, Architecture, Epigraphy, Ancient Indian History and Culture, Philosophy, Eastern Religions, Religion, and all other subjects covered by Orientalology.

The book "*Nepales Miniatures*," written by Dr. R. Das Gupta, is the second volume under the schedule of our publication on Art & Architecture, the first being "*THE ART OF CAMBODIAN ARCHITECTURE*" by L. J. Kim Long. It is a pleasant book on the Miniature Paintings of Nepal which are mainly to be traced to the numerous manuscripts of that ancient country. It is the result of the untiring toil of the author under the guidance of the eminent Art Historian and Indologist, the late Dr. V. S. Agarwal.

TO

CHITRALEKHA AND SUVARṆASRI

The book is specially remarkable for the number of illustrations, which have been published. The Department of History of Art, A. M. U., has written a Foreword which will give the value of the book and its importance. It is hoped that the readers, our patrons, and the scholars will appreciate our effort and heartily welcome our new volume.

The book has been nicely printed on art and supercalender paper containing 120 illustrations and tri-colour blocks etc.

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FOREWORD

In India every form of art is said to be of divine origin, as one comes to know from the myths and legends preserved in the ancient texts. In the *Ramāyana* the creation of the first painting is ascribed to Brahmā. In the *Bṛihat Samhita* of Varāhamihira (sixth century A. D.) the knowledge of architecture is said to have descended from Brahmā through a series of terrestrial artists. Stories like these are meant to give the artistic activities a divine sanction in a society that is primarily religion-oriented. At the same time, they may indicate the high antiquity of the arts concerned. The *Vishṇudharmottaram*, a text close to the *Bṛihat Samhita* in date, describes painting to be the 'best of all arts' and as conducive to the attainment of the four ends of life, *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *moksha* (*kalānām pravaram chitram dharma-kām-artha-mokshadam*). It is also said to be 'auspicious' (*māṅgalyam*) and as bringing in good luck.

Indian painting covers a wide panorama in time and space. The extant records may broadly be classed under two categories : 1. Wall painting (*bhitti chitra*) and 2. miniature painting, the former executed, in a kind of tempera on walls in large scale, the latter in *gouache* in the small format of manuscripts. Surviving documents of the former category are much earlier than those of the latter. Nevertheless, from casual references in literature the tradition of manuscript painting may also be known to be of substantial antiquity. It is on account of the extremely fragile nature of the material that the earlier specimens have perished.

The earliest surviving records of manuscript painting come from Eastern India (Bihar and Bengal) and belong to the last quarter of the tenth century A. D. Reference may be made in this context to three illustrated manuscripts of the Buddhist text *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* copied respectively in the 5th, 6th and 7th years of the reign of Mahipāla (I), the Pāla king, who began his reign about A. D. 980. All the three manuscripts are known to have emanated from Nālandā, the famous Buddhist monastery of those days. Such monasteries were the active centres of copying and illuminating manuscripts. The series continues through the eleventh and twelfth centuries and the tradition is found to collapse abruptly, apparently as a result of the shock of the Muslim conquest of the land. Illustrated manuscripts are available of the reigns of the Pāla kings Nayapāla, Rāmapāla, Gopāla (III) and Govindapāla and several belong also to the reign of Harivarman, the king of Vāṅga. From Western India records of such painting are available from about a century later, mainly in manuscripts of the sacred Jaina texts. The documents coming from these two widely apart regions testify to the existence of two forceful styles of manuscript painting, prevailing more or less

simultaneously and designated respectively as the 'Eastern' and the 'Western'. They possibly correspond to the Eastern and Western styles of painting referred to by the Tibetan historian Tāranāth. Though approximately contemporaneous, the two styles present significant divergences in character. The Western style survived longer and the early Rajasthani style, which took shape in the latter half of the sixteenth century, is known to have incorporated certain elements from the Western.

Though short-lived, the Eastern style of Bengal and Bihar is known to have extended over a wide territory, Burma in the east and Nepal and Tibet in the north. Nepal, on account of geographical proximity and historical circumstances, is known to have been within the orbit of Indian culture from the earliest days. During the early mediaeval period the contact between Eastern India and Nepal was activated further by religion and the Eastern style of manuscript painting, naturally and logically, extended to Nepal. From Nepal it travelled further north to Tibet.

The earliest records of such painting from Nepal are in a manuscript of the *Aṣṭasahasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*, copied in Nepāla Samvat 135/A. D. 1015, now in the Cambridge University Library. Like the Eastern Indian, in Nepal also the paintings were executed on the folios as well as on the insides of the wooden covers of the manuscripts. The two covers of a manuscript of the same text, in the collection of the writer of this foreword, supply the next specimens. The manuscript was copied in N. S. 148/A. D. 1028 and in the paintings on these covers, apparently contemporaneous to the date of the copy, the Eastern style is found to have taken firm roots in the Nepal valley. As the fair number of documents would show, the Eastern style was followed in Nepal in all its characteristic features of sinuous and flowing lines, glowing colours and plastically modelled mass till about the middle of the twelfth century. Nepalese manuscript painting of the eleventh century and the first half of the twelfth may be described, to all intents and purposes, to be an extension of the Eastern style. In the paintings of manuscript, again of the *Aṣṭasahasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*, copied in E. S. 268/A. D. 1148 (now in the Asiatic Society, Calcutta), the colour treatment grows thinner and the sinuous quality of the line suffers to a certain extent. At the same time there may be recognised intrusions of certain features that may be attributed to Chinese influence. Yet, the Eastern style remains potent and valid in Nepalese manuscript paintings of the second half of the twelfth century. After the sudden dissolution of the style in Eastern India about A. D. 1200 the Nepalese version continues to be active for several centuries more. But with the drying up of the source it moves farther and farther away from the basic standard of the Eastern style. It was during this later phase of Nepalese manuscript painting that a characteristically Nepalese idiom was developed. But that too disintegrates by the close of the eighteenth century.

The paintings, whether on the folios of the manuscripts or on their wooden covers, can hardly be classed as book illustrations. The themes presented, except in the manuscripts of the *Pañcharakṣhā*, have little or no relation to the subject matter of the relevant texts. Irrespective of the texts, the events in the life of the Buddha and the divinities of the Buddhist pantheon of the day constitute the frequently repeated themes of these manuscript paintings. Their purpose thus appears to be ritual and magical, not illustrative. The sacred texts in the manuscripts were meant to be recited, and are actually known to have been so recited, periodically on auspicious occasions. They may hence be considered to be *māṅgalyas*. There was also the desire on the part of the votaries to illumine their sacred texts with glowing embellishments of form and colour.

The paintings were, no doubt, executed within the small format of manuscripts—narrow strips of palm leaves in the earlier phase and of paper in the later. The major part of the folio was filled up by writing with a small space, sometimes two and very rarely three, reserved for paintings, which rarely exceed a dimension of 2.5 by 3 inches. They are miniatures only in scale. It has been clearly recognised that their character is that of reduced wall paintings. The elements and features that distinguish the large-scale wall paintings of Ajanta and Bagh of the classical phase are fully valid in manuscript paintings of the Eastern style and those of Nepal of the early phase. This truth will become evident when the small-scale paintings in the manuscripts are blown up to the scale of the wall paintings. The modelling and modulating capacity of line and colour, as one sees in classical Ajanta, is equally potent in these paintings. They may, hence, be aptly described as extensions of the classical style of wall paintings. Their description as 'miniatures' hardly suits their import.

Rich in output and with a fair number of felicitous productions spread over the entire period of its duration, Nepalese manuscript painting offers a vast and instructive field of study. Except for a few articles, and those mostly based on individual sets and with an emphasis on iconography, there has been hardly any comprehensive study, particularly from the standpoint of the history of the style. The present book by Dr. Rajatananda Das Gupta is an attempt in that direction. He has discussed the history of the style in all its important aspects with reference to available documents significant for this purpose. He has described, though briefly, the fundamentals of the technique followed in these paintings. A comparison of this style with the almost contemporaneous Western style enhances the value of his study. Further, he has tried to reconstruct, from these paintings, a picture of the material culture of the time and in this context has endeavoured to point out the links of Nepal with other territories. The author has presented his observations objectively and in a clear and lucid manner, always keeping himself within the limits prescribed by his data. Only one feels that he has been rather

brief. But no important aspect within his scope has been ignored. Dr. Das Gupta has been commendably successful in what he aimed at and his book must be considered to be a welcome addition to the existing literature on the subject.

Department of History of Art
Banaras Hindu University.
September 20, 1968

S. K. Saraswati

PREFACE

The present book is a section of the author's doctoral thesis "Manuscript Painting In Mediaeval Eastern India", on which the Ph. D. degree was awarded by the Banaras Hindu University in 1964. The author seeks to draw up a systematic and chronological account of miniature painting in Nepal. A special study has been made in this work of the art of manuscript illumination from the Buddhist and Brahmanical manuscripts from Nepal. Unlike the Mughal and the Rajasthani schools of painting of India, no separate miniatures were normally painted in Nepal. Hence Nepalese miniature painting is essentially book-illustration or manuscript-illumination as in Assam. But in the later periods (18th-19th. centuries A. D.) separate miniatures were produced depicting Hindu and Buddhist deities for selling to pilgrims visiting Nepal.

The period covered in this book is from the 11th. century A. D. to the present age. The earliest period of Nepalese painting corresponds to the Pala school of painting of Eastern India. The different intermediate stages of Nepalese painting have also been explored. Nepal occupies an important position in the art history of Central Asia and South Asia not only due to her geographical location but also due to the close relations that existed between the paintings of Nepal, India, Tibet and China.

Being primarily a religious art, Nepalese painting is conservative. Many stylistic features and details met with in the initial phase are continued till much later times and are preserved even to our days. These miniatures are also of great value to students of Brahmanical and Buddhist iconography since many uncommon types of deities and syncretistic deities were conceived of in Nepal. The art of Nepal is also catholic and eclectic in nature, and painting is no exception to this tendency. This was the result of a perfect blending of races, religions and cultures in this Himalayan valley. Nepal was the gateway to Tibet through which Indian religious and art traditions passed in to the latter country.

The examples of miniatures reproduced in the book are from palm-leaf and paper folios of manuscripts and also from wooden book-covers. The paintings are in gouache,—a technique exceedingly popular in Nepal. Gold paint and even small gems were used for embellishing paintings and bookcovers. Leather and repoussé metal plates were also used for special types of book-covers. Stylistically, book-illustrations of a period were similar in theme, technique and style to other kinds of painting like the scrolls, Tankas and murals of the corresponding period from Nepal.

Vijayādasami

1968

Varanasi.

Rajatananda Das Gupta

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The Banaras Hindu University deserve my thanks and gratitude for permitting me to publish my Ph. D. thesis of which this present work is a part. But for the guidance and care of my esteemed teacher the late Dr. V. S. Agrawala the thesis and the two books which have been composed out of it would not have seen the light of the day. I am also grateful to Prof. S. K. Saraswati, Head of the Department of History of Art of the Banaras Hindu University for his valuable suggestions regarding the various aspects of the present book and also for writing its Foreword. He has also been kind enough in permitting me to publish Plates Nos. I a. and I b. of this work which are from his private collection. I thank Sri Haridas Swali of Bombay for his kind permission to reproduce the six colour plates of miniatures which form a section of his own collection. M/S. Tata Sons Private Limited, Bombay also deserve my gratitude for supplying me with the colour blocks for the above plates. The authorities of the Bharat Kala Bhawan, Banaras Hindu University have been kind enough in supplying me with fourteen black & white plates and in extending permission for reproducing those in the Nepalese Miniature. I am specially grateful to them. Lastly, I must acknowledge my thanks to my wife for preparing the index of this volume.

Rajatananda Das Gupta

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DESCRIPTIONS OF DIAGRAMS

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Niches. | 13. Dhārērā. |
| 2. Parasol. | 14. Tunic. |
| 3. Damaru-shaped seat. | 15. Helmet. |
| 3a. Visvapadma. | 16. Nepalese cap. |
| 4. Lampstand. | 17. Dhol-shaped pendant. |
| 5. Incense burner. | 18. Blouse and girdle. |
| 6a. Elephant headed vessel. | 19. Mukūṭa. |
| 6b. Platter. | 20. Dhūmāvati. |
| 6c. Elephant headed vessel. | 21. Kundala. |
| 7. Cup. | 22. Kundala. |
| 8. Dhol. | 23. Necklace. |
| 8a. Babhu. | 24. Bracelet. |
| 8b. Trumpets. | |

CHAPTER I

NEPAL

Nepalese miniatures are primarily book illustrations from Buddhist scriptures on palm leaves or on the wooden book-covers locally known as the *Bāsās*. In the early period they are identical in style, technique and content with the Pāla paintings from Eastern India on similar subjects. The close proximity of Nepal with Eastern India was responsible for the closeness in the paintings of the two regions and it continued to be so in all ages in varying degrees. In Nepal temple banners, cloth scrolls and *Toranas* or temple banners represent forms of miniature paintings other than those from the manuscripts. The Pala School and its derivations continued in Nepal till the 17th-18th century, when the Rajasthani School entered the country and influenced the native painting style to some degree. Not only manuscripts but *Toranas* and other forms of painting were also produced in the new style. But the indigenous painters of the *Newār* community assiduously clung to the native style. Published materials on Nepalese painting is rather sparse. The following books and papers, however, serve as the spring-board for any account on the subject.

1. History of Fine Arts in India and Ceylon : Smith, V. A. 1930
2. Ancient and Mediæval Nepal : Regmi, D. R.
3. The Art And Architecture of India : Rowland B. R. 1956 2nd. edition.
4. History of Buddhism: Heely, W. L.; Indian Antiquary. Vol. IV.
5. Kirāta Jana Kriti: Chatterji, S. K. 1951.
6. The Astasahasrikā Prajñāpāramitā (A-15) Ms. of the Asiatic Society of Bengal : J. I. S. O. A. Vol. II. 1935.
7. Nepalese Painting : Kramrisch, S.: J. I. S. O. A. Vol. III. 1936.
8. Some Brahmanical Miniatures from Nepal : Bagchi, P. C.; J. I. S. O. A. Vol. V. 1937.
9. A painted Book-cover from Nepal : Mukherji, M.; J. I. S. O. A. Vol. XIV. 1946.
10. Note on a Nepalese Manuscript Miniature : Marg; Vol. IV. No. 2.
11. Nepal : Gairola, C. K.; Marg, Vol. IX. No. 2.
12. Mediæval Buddhist Art and its offshoots : Gangoly, O. C.; Do
13. Tibet: Roerich, G; Do
14. History of Nepal : Wright, D. 1877. London
15. Bhārat Ki Chitrakalā : Rai Krishnadasa (Hindi) 2017 B. Era. 3rd Edn.
16. Bhāratér Chitrā Kalā : Mitra, A. (Bengali) 1363 Bengali Era. 1st Edn.
17. Chitradarshan : Samanta, K. (Bengali) 1881 Saka. 1st Edn.

18. The Art of Nepal—Kramrisch, S. 1964.
19. The Art of India & Nepal 1966. The Nasli and Alice Heeramanek Collection. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.
20. Mediæval Nepal—Regmi, D. R. 1966
Parts II and III Calcutta.

For a correct understanding of the factors that led to the development of painting in Nepal, it is necessary to understand the geography of the region for, geography influences the history of a country and its people, and moulds their character as well as gives shape to its creative activities including painting. Though today man has reached a point where he may not think of himself as mere plaything of Nature and geography, in the past his dependence was far greater and thus his whole history and art was channelled into avenues created by his environments. To the north of the great Indian plains are the Himalayas termed as the Maryādā Parvata or the frontier mountain of India in the Purāṇic literature.¹ It harbours the Hindu-Buddhist kingdom of Nepal which though politically isolated from India had remained an integral part of Indian culture-sphere and particularly of Eastern India which not only supplied her with rulers but also with scholars and artists without interruptions. And her art too had been, as has been pointed out by Benjamin Rowland, "Provincial Indian Buddhist Art".² The service, that Nepal rendered by harbouring the Māhāyāna arts and traditions after the destruction of Nālandā and Vikramśīlā Universities (1199-1200 A.D.) can hardly be said to be a contribution lesser than any part of Eastern India in the History of Mahayanism.

The country of Nepal has an approximate area of five hundred miles by hundred and ten miles. The valley is well defined by the Himalayas in the north, Sikkim in the east and the provinces of India and Pakistan to the south and the west. But the natives restrict the name Nepal to the country around the capital which is an extensive tract of comparatively level ground, entirely surrounded by mountains. This tract of land is twenty miles from east to west while from north to south it is only fifteen miles. Lofty mountains surround this area of which the following peaks are important viz., Mahādéo Pokhri to the east, Nāgārjun to the west; in the north the peaks Munichur, Shéopurī, Kukami and the Kowhilia; the Chandragiri, Chāmpādēvī, Phuphing and Phulchowk (9720') to the south. The level of the valley itself is 4,500 feet above the sea level.

The surface of the valley consists of grounds on two levels constituting a series of table-lands (*Tārs*) and valleys (*Kholās*) through each of which a small stream usually flows. The difference in level between the *Tārs* and *Kholās* vary greatly. Near the base of the hill it is not so great, but it rapidly increases towards the centre of the valley and in some places the precipitous edges of the *Tārs* are from 30 to 100 feet in height.

1. Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa: 54, 26; Srimad Bhāgāvata: 5, 16, 6-10.

2. Rowland, B: Art & Architecture of India; 147.

The early history of Nepal is lost in a number of legendary stories and Mahayanist traditions. The earliest historical reference to Nepal we find during the reign of Samudra Gupta, in whose Allahabad Pillar Inscription, Nepal finds a place. It is described as a frontier state (*Pratyanta-Néṣāla-Nriṣati*) whose king probably belonged to the Sūryavaṃśī Licchāvī clan, which was spread from Nepal to Bihar and Eastern Uttar Pradesh.

The *Vaṃśāvalis* or the *Nēwārī* chronicles are one of the chief sources of our knowledge of early Nepalese history. According to these Nepal was ruled at the earliest times by Ahiras or Gopālas i. e., a race of cowherds who were probably Sanskritic in their culture. Then some time before the Christian era a wholesale influx of Mongoloid people flooded the valley of Nepal, and those people had been described as the *Kirātas* in the *Vaṃśāvalis*. They were the ancestors of the *Nēwārs* who gave their name to the country. These *Kirāta* kings were undoubtedly preparing the way for *Nēwār* and other Indo-Mongoloid domination in the affairs of Nepal and for their fullest participation in the development of its Hindu (Buddhist and Brahmanical) culture in the centuries to come.¹ The capital of the *Kirāta* kings was Gokarṇa, in the north of Nepal valley.

The *Kirātas* were suppressed by Sūryavaṃśī Licchavīs from Bihar in the middle of the 4th century A. D. With them Hindu culture flourished. Buddhism and Brahmanism (Viṣṇu and Śiva worship) were their cults and with their rule Vaisnavism as well as Śaiva and Śākta shrines of Nepal came into prominence..... But in the first half of the 7th century Aṃśuvarman, a Mahāsāmanta of the Thākuri dynasty became the *de facto* ruler of Nepal. But after him there was again a Licchavi restoration. Jayadēva of the Licchavī dynasty married Rājyamati, a princess of Kāmarūpa, who was probably the daughter of Harjaravarman of the Śālastambha dynasty (C. 650-800 A. D.). There are some reasons to believe that Nepal in the 8th or 9th centuries was under a virtual Tibetan domination. But with the accession of Glong-Darma to the throne of Tibet in 838 A. D. the country was weakened by internal dissension and religious persecution and Nepal was able to free herself.

The next period of Nepalese history is of main interest to us. The *Thākuri* dynasty was founded in the 9th century in liberated Nepal which was again bifurcated into the houses of Nayākot (1046-1197 A. D.) and Pātan (1080-1098 A. D.) in the 11th century. "The *Thākuri* period was one of very close cultural connection of Nepal with India (Bihar and Bengal) on the one hand and with Tibet and China on the other." There was progress in every sphere. "The plastic arts and trade flourished exceedingly, Sanskrit learning was greatly advanced and *corpus* of the Buddhist Sanskrit literature of the Mahāyāna school was copied and preserved in the monastery libraries (*Bohāls and Tols*) of Nepal. The latest development of Mahāyāna

in Bengal and Bihar found congenial soil in Nepal, and Nepalese scholars, Tibeto-Burman speaking, possibly mostly *Nēwars*, went to Buddhist universities of India like Nālandā and Vikramaśilā for higher studies.....The Indo-Mongoloids of Nepal may be said to have found themselves as a distinctive section of the Indian people sharing in and enriching the Brahmana-Buddhist culture they adopted from the time of the *Thākuris*.

A new royal dynasty with fresh cultural elements came to Nepal about the middle of the 12th century when the Karnāta kings became established at Simraon in Southern Nepal. The Karnātas were Kannāda speaking barons or military chiefs from the Deccan who followed the victorious arms of Vikramāditya the son of Chālukyan emperor Somēśvara I (1040-'69 A. D.) into North Eastern India including Bengal and Mithila.....The Karnāta rule did not extend beyond the first quarter of the 14th century. By that time a new dynasty, a national one for the *Nēwars* of Nepal, established itself after one of the earlier founders of this new line, Jayasthiti Malla who married Rajjalā Dēvī, of the Nepalese royal family.

The Mallas ruled in Nepal in its three branches upto the conquest of the country by the Gorkhās, of mixed Mongoloid-Brahmana-Kshatriya origin in 1768 A. D. The Mallas, however, were related to the Licchavis and were in all likelihood a mixed Indian and Indo-Mongoloid people speaking *Nēwarī* language. But they cultivated Sanskrit and contemporary Indian languages like Maithili, Bengali, Kosali, or Eastern Hindi and the earlier Apabhraṃsa. "After the eruption of the Turks in Bihar and Bengal and destruction of their monasteries and temples and massacre of scholars and monks at Nālandā, Nepal gave asylum to scholars and others fleeing the Muslim Turk's terror with their books and their gods." "This fresh and large scale advent of refugee scholars and artists from India, Bihar and Bengal, gave rise to a sort of Renaissance in the artistic and religious life of Nepal from the 13th century onwards. "The highest achievement of the *Nēwars* as an Indo-Mongoloid people who had adopted both Buddhism and Brahmanism with Gangetic culture took place under the Mallas, particularly in the 17th century. After Yaksha Malla's time, C. 1474 A. D. the single Kingdom of Nepal was split up into four small states of Bhātgāon, Banapa, Kāthmando and Pātan.

"It is in this last phase of *Nēwarī* creativeness that the *Tantrik* way of knowing the ultimately Real was given support by images of frenzied grandeur.¹

Accessories and materials for painting the manuscript miniatures in Nepal in the earlier phase were the same as those used by the Pāla artists. Later on two local term viz., *Pothi* and *Bāsā* were used to mean the manuscript and the book-covers respectively. Two important works from Tibet viz., the *Pog-Zom-Zam* and the *History of Buddhism* by Tārānāth give us a lot of informations on the

1. Kramrisch, S : The art of Nepal; p. 40. 1964.

state of painting in Eastern India, Nepal and Tibet between the period between the 11th¹ and the 17th² centuries. In Nepal as in Bengal the book-covers were as important carriers of painting as the palm-leaf folios of the manuscripts. Though in the early mediæval period the Muslims introduced and popularised paper for manuscripts yet for illustrations the wooden book-covers and the palm-leaf folios were more preferred. Gradually, the palm-leaf manuscript came to be regarded as more pure and venerable than their paper counterparts, and palm leaves were used even as late as the 19th century, when hand-made as well as millmade paper was easily available.

A special variety of the palmyra tree fronds known as the *Śrī Tāḍ* in Western India was grown in Bengal for the purpose of making folios out of them. These were also exported to Nepal as they were to Western India and other parts. The sheets that were obtainable from the *Śrī Tāḍ* were 37" × 3" out of which folios of approximately 23" × 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ "³ were prepared. These folios were smooth flexible and delicate and were ideally suited for writing as well as for painting. The elasticity of the leaves prevented them from breaking and cracking and the pigments too did not chip off easily. The presence of acids in the inks used for writing affected the palm-leaves as a result of which they turned black the extra paper folios of the manuscript or the cloth that wrapped it. Thus the manuscripts appear older to their actual date and give rise to chronological controversies and problems regarding the dating of the paintings.

Paper was used in Nepal at a fairly early stage. A manuscript dated 1105 A. D. from the Asutosh Museum is the earliest example of paper manuscript from the pre-Islamic period.⁴ Nepalese paper is still known for its quality and writing surface which make it popular with Nepalese and Indian artists, manuscript writers and astrologers. Another important variety of Nepalese manuscript was the folded manuscript made in the manner of similar examples from Ceylon and the Parabaiks of Burma. These were made by folding backward and forward long sheets of papers which opened up like a fan. In many such manuscripts the covers were of leather for flexibility and durability.

Although water colour was the usual process for painting on the folios the paintings on the wooden book-covers were done in a *tempera* process.⁵ Usually

1. Bhattasali, N. K. : Iconography of Buddhist & Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum.

2. Heely, W. L. : Extracts from Taranath's History of Buddhism; Indian Antiquary, Vol. IV, pp. 101-116.

3. Ghosh, A. : Miniatures of a newly discovered palm-leaf manuscript from Bengal; Rupam, Nos. 38-39. 1929, p. 27.

4. Motichandra : Jaina Miniature Paintings from Western India 1949., p. 69.

5. Mookherji, M. : Two Illuminated Manuscripts in the Asutosh Museum of India, Calcutta; J. I. S. O. A., Vol. XV., p.

6. Mitra, A. : Bharater Chitrakālā; p. 242.

a white size was used as binding medium for the colours. The five primary colours mentioned in the Visnudharmottara and the Bhārata Nāṭyaśāstra were used by the Pala-Nepalese painters but it was also determined by the dictates of iconography and Rasa. "They included orpiment, yellow, white, indigo, Indian-ink black, cinnabar red and green the last being a mixture of orpiment and indigo. But on the whole the general colour arrangement of the divinities is mostly determined by iconographical requirements. Neither Indian red nor any ochres, nor ultramarine is used. Tonality of colours is practically unknown. The outline is drawn either in black or in red, and as is used in Indian painting seems to have been sketched out first and later on filled in with colour."¹ According to Vredenburg the white paint that was used to indicate the highlight in paintings was White Lead.² But in the opinion of Ajit Ghosh it was either Kaolin or Chalk.³ The colours were all mineral except indigo. He thinks that Cobalt blue and Lapis-Lazuli was also used as in the case of the A-15 manuscript from the Asiatic Society in which the latter colour had been employed. Colours were laid on a prepared surface though they themselves were pure. Orpiment was successfully used by the artist of this period though modern Western technique finds it difficult to manage its freshness.⁴ Gold paint was freely used in all periods of Nepalese painting to indicate ornaments, metalwares and even stars and planets and lightning in the clouds.

But according to Stella Kramrisch, "Nepali paintings whether on palm-leaf, paper, wood or cloth are carried in gouache."⁵

1. Ray, N. R. : History of Bengal; p. 550-'51. 1st edition. 1943. Dacca.
2. Vredenburg, E: The Continuation of the Pictorial Tradition in the Art of India; Rupam, Nos. 1-4. 1920.
3. Ghosh, A: Miniatures of a Newly Discovered Buddhist Palm-leaf manuscripts from Bengal; Rupam 38-39, 1929.
4. Ibid.
5. Kramrisch, S. : The Art of Nepal, p. 43. 1964.



CHAPTER II

NEPALESE PAINTING

The evolution of Nepalese painting is as intimately connected with that of India as the early history of the two lands. In Nepal the indigenous Mongoloid population and culture fused with the Indian elements introduced by settlers from Āryāvarta from a very early date produced a definitely Nepalese character and style. In the making of the culture and the art of Nepal the contribution of these two races had been equally important. And the art of painting was no exception to this tendency. Painting perhaps shows the fusion more clearly than any other art form of Nepal. In every age of creative activity in Āryāvarta Nepal promptly responded as we can find from the accounts of Tārānāth whose "History of Buddhism In India"¹ compiled in 1608 A. D., is a veritable storehouse of information for the present chapter. An analogy is found in another neighbouring country, Ceylon, where "every great change in India's political, religious, social or economic—had its repercussions in this island, and every wave of Indian civilization up to the end of the 15th century made its way to this land and left its mark on the life and thought of its people."² But this process continued in Nepal for about three centuries more. The large number of illustrated manuscripts and painted book-covers from the Pāla period to the 18th century also corroborate the above observations. But it was with Eastern India that the ties of Nepal were most intimate, longstanding and continuous. The Buddhist Pāla art of Bihar and Bengal was so great a contemporary source of inspiration to Nepalese art that those belonging to these different regions could hardly be distinguished. "Since there is hardly any appreciable major stylistic difference between the illuminations of Bihar and Bengal or Bengal and Nepal at least till as late as the thirteenth century A. D. they may conveniently be studied as belonging to one and the same school."³

The observations of Dr. N. R. Ray as quoted above are convincing in the context of a comparative study of Pāla and contemporary Nepalese illustrations. The true nature of these Buddhist manuscripts paintings can be best found in the following observations of Foucher on the nature of Buddhist art of the age. "*Ces huit miracles persisteraient seuls jusqu'au bout sur les stèles du Magadha et du Bengale, sans parler*

1. Heely, H. L. : Extracts from Taranath's History of Buddhism in India; Indian Antiquary, Vol. IV, pp. 101-118.

2. Mendis, : The Early History of Ceylon; p. 1.

3. Ray, N. R. : Art : Eastern India (Bengal, Bihar, Nepal and Tibet); The Struggle For Empire, p. 690.

*des miniatures Népalaises. Mais'en revanche nous voyons la porte du panthéon boudhique forcée partout une foule grouillante de divinités nouvelles, véritables figures de cauchemar, presque toujours horribles et parfois luxurieuses, dont la descendance directe continue encore à 'fleurir dans l'art lamaïque contemporain.'*¹ Thus a new and enlarged pantheon enabled the Nepalese artist to paint freely, drawing his imagery from the *Dhyānas* and *Sādhana*s up till the 18th century, if not to this day. The typically Eastern style of painting continued till the time of Tārānāth but there must have been a decisive fall in the standard of execution as we can infer from Tārānāth's statement that the Nepalese artists of this time produced works which had 'no special character.'² In the next period, beginning from the 16th century in Eastern India, specially in Bengal a new style overpowers the decadent Pāla-Sēna School. The contact of Bengal is now more with Mathura region through the Neo-Vaishnavism of Śrī Chaitanya Dēva and as a result the so-called Rajasthani element enters Bengal. Nepal too develops the new *Nēwārī* style and for the time being there is not much communication between Bengal and Nepal.

Speaking about the impact of Eastern India in Nepalese art Stella Kramrisch says that "even when this school sent its illuminated manuscripts and probably also its painters to Nepal from about the year 1000, the influence of Pāla art is not noticeable till later times."³ By 1094 A.D. Nepal was also conquered by a Kanarese adventurer, Nānya Deva, as the Sēnas did with the Pāla dominion." By the end of the 12th century, furthermore, the Muslim conquest of Bengal brought to Nepal refugee artists from Eastern India. It was then that the Eastern Indian art tradition was given a most subtle reinterpretation in Nepal.⁴ The next phase was one of greater influence of Eastern Indian art under the Mallas (till about 1480 A. D.) but the ascendancy "reached its height in the thirteenth century."⁵

But Nepal could not resist the Rajasthani influence much longer. The new waves of painting with Rajasthani elements appear in Nepal after the conquest of the Valley by the Rajputs from the plains of north India. Even before the actual conquest Rajasthani idioms had already made a place in Nepal. But Nepal was not always the borrower. She had her own sphere of influence on Tibetan painting. The eastern style penetrated the Tibetan province of Tsang adjoining Nepal from the north. Thus grew the typically Tibetan School of painting. "Early examples of this art exhibit strong Nepalese inspiration. The art of Tibetan miniature painting is also of Indio-Nepalese origin. This art was very popular in the XI and XII centuries A. D., and a number of illustrated manuscripts

1. Foucher, A : Etude sur l'art Boudhique de L'inde; p. 49. Tokyo.

2. Smith, V. A. : History of Fine Arts In India and Ceylon; Part II, Ch. xxi, p. 165.

3. Kramrisch, S : The Art of Nepal; p. 39. 1964.

4. Ibid. p. 40.

5. Ibid. p. 40.

belong to this period."¹ The illustrations of miniatures of this period in Guiseppe Tucci's monumental work, Tibetan Painting, really conform to contemporary Pāla and Nepalese style, in theme, technique and design. Chinese chronicles have recorded the name of one Anika² who was a Nepalese artist of the late 12th century. He was first commissioned to China where the influence of his style and ingenuity was great enough to have him raised to the imperial *atelier*.

Kramrisch maintains that Anika or A-ni-ke first went to Tibet with his eighty artists and was responsible for the growth of a school there. Nepali artists went to paint the chapels of the Nor monastery of Tibet in 1429 A. D. They also painted the *Mandalas* or magic diagrams, *paṭas* and portraits of the abbots of the Sa Skya Pa School. Nepali artists also painted at Guge in western Tibet. In Tibet Nepali artists also absorbed some Chinese motifs, specially from textiles³. But by the middle of the fourteenth century the "meticulous fineness of miniature painting was disappearing in Nepal in some paintings which were larger in size and were made for the newly built monasteries of the "Yellow Church" of Tibet favoured by Tson Kha Pa⁴. The counter influence of Tibetan painting on that of Nepal is seen by the seventeenth century and two dated examples (1622 A. D.) are preserved in the Indian Museum, Calcutta. But this was more Tibetan-Chinese than purely Tibetan. "Spatial illusion entered Nepali painting from India, through the Rajasthani-Nepali School of the seventeenth century. With it Mughal, Persian and Western Renaissance perspective was in Nepali style."⁵

1. The Camb. Add. 1643 copy of the *Astasahasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* manuscript (1015 A. D.) is the earliest example of illustrated manuscript from Népal. It is also the earliest available example of Pāla painting.

2. The next manuscript that takes its place in chronological order is another copy of the *Astasahasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* produced in the Népal Era 148 or 1028 A. D. during the reign of King Rudra Déva. But stylistically this manuscript can be grouped with the same manuscript dated 1015 A. D. The two book covers of the manuscript in question "bear elegant specimens of miniature paintings in the style and tradition of the period."⁶ The subject is as usual restricted to the nativity scene of the Buddha as well as events from his life and also some Vajrayāna deities. The tradition which produced the Camb. Add. 1643 manus-

1. Bagchi, P. C. : Bharat O Chin; Visva Vidyā Saṁgraha Series, No. 81, p. 49, Calcutta.

2. Mookerji, M : An illustrated cover of a manuscript of the *Astasahasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* in a Private Collection : Lalit Kala, No. 6, October, 1959, p. 54.

3. Kramrisch, S : The Art of Nepal, p. 44. 1964.

4. Ibid : p. 46.

5. Ibid pp 44-45

6. Ibid : p. 47.

cript equally influenced the present manuscript and the style essentially remains the same. "In composition in draughtsmanship in colour scheme, in ethnic types and decorations both represents an identical tradition."¹

The paintings have a general red background and the different scenes though not otherwise separated are kept from intrusion only by the two punch holes on the bookcovers. There is however, a great delicacy and fluency in the lines; and the colours seem to possess tonality but their authenticity is not certain since age might have been a factor in the change of colours in places. Plasticity of line is also present as is typical with Pāla miniatures of the early period to which this manuscript belongs. The lines move in continuous flowing curves and successfully model the masses and volumes within the given contour. Human figures are full, sinuous and rounded while draughtsmanship attains the height in the decorative motifs. Some landscape is also attempted by arranging stylized plantain trees at uniform distances. Scenes from the Buddha's nativity include Hindu deities like Indra, Śiva and Brahmā which was, however, intentional for missionary purposes to show the supremacy of Buddhism over the orthodox religion. And this practice has also been noted in the Vajrayāna iconography of later day Nepal. Thus we can say that these two bookcovers contain "the most noteworthy specimens of Eastern Indian miniature painting".² (Plate 1)

Lines here have studied perfection but these are less immediate than those from Bengal. "The flamboyant intricacies of scroll work on thrones and manorlas add an agitation controlled by their near-geometrical outline. When shown standing, the figures seem to float in their swaying stances, walking they glide and soar forecasting the ambiguous stance of some later day sculptures".³ (Plates 1a., 1b.)

An important manuscript of the *Astasahasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* (1054 A. D.) from the Heeramanek Collection shows the eight miracles of the Buddha's life in an unusual manner. "It is an almost ascetically linear style despite the occasional attempts at modelling, but none the less very expressive and vivacious. There is a tendency towards marked elongation in the majority of figures".⁴ Indra and Brahmā carry fish and sweets,—auspicious symbols, while they receive the newborn Buddha. The *Dharmachakra Pravartana* scene is omitted.

Two other manuscripts (both copies of the *Pañcharakṣā*) from the Asutosh Museum, Calcutta are valuable sources of information about

1. Mookerji, M : An illustrated cover of the *Astasahasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* in a Private Collection; *Lalit Kalā*, No. 6, October 1959, p. 62.
2. Ibid : p. 62. (Prof. S. K. Saraswati Collection, Calcutta)
3. Kramrisch, S. : *The Art of Nepal*; p. 43. 1964.
4. *The Arts of India and Nepal* (The Nāsli and Alice Heeramanek Collection, Museum of Fine Arts. Boston p. 119, 1966.

the state of painting in Nepal during the first quarter of the 12th century. In general, they conform to contemporary Eastern Indian ideal. The first manuscript (No. T 1055) dated 225 Népal Era corresponding to 1105 A. D. was done during king Siha Deva's rule. But the name of the King in the other (No. T 140) is Śiva Deva while the date is 239-40 Nepal era or 1119-'20 A. D. The two kings are none but the same person as the reign period indicates. These manuscripts "though apparently contemporary, show a well marked divergence in workmanship and artistic quality."¹ The first manuscript is definitely done in a better standard than the latter one as far as the general scheme of conception, execution and details are concerned. The line is still rhythmic and flexible and the colour scheme is balanced. The only treatment Nature gets is through a single tree at the background of the group of three male deities. This tree with large leaves and a neat crown, we can say, is the parent from which prototypes emerge in mediaeval Bengali scrolls and the 19th century *Astamangalā* book-cover from Assam. The richness of details in ornaments, patterns of clothes and aureoles are another remarkable feature of these manuscripts. Artists took much liberty in making the poses of deities more graceful even when the *Sadhana* seemed to prescribe more rigid ones like the *Vajraparyankāsana*. Standard of workmanship and general treatment of lines fall considerably in the later manuscript (No. T. 140). "The contrast thus furnished by two, almost contemporary works, afford an interesting study".²

The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston has a Gandavyūha manuscript of circa 12th century which was, however, identified as being of the *Gunakarandavyūha*, by Kramrisch. The main figure is shown conversing with the deities. The forest is represented by a single tree or a jutting stone "delineated in an expressivistic and conceptual fashion." The subject is characterised by animated vigour and langourous grace and a mastery in drawing and delineation of form."³ Other leaves of the manuscript are in the Seattle Art Museum and Cleaveland Museum of Art.

The next important miniatures are from the bookcovers No. 4077 of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta. These bookcovers ($22\frac{1}{2}'' \times 2\frac{1}{2}''$) were used to bind manuscripts of several texts, as noted below :

1. The Lalitavistāra manuscripts
2. The Śivadharmasāstram manuscript
3. The Śivadharmottara manuscript
4. The Sivadharmasamgraha manuscript
5. The Umā-Mahéśvarasamvāda manuscript

1. Mookerjee, M. : Two illuminated manuscript in the Asutosh Museum of Indian Art; J. I. S. O. A., Vol. XV, p. 98. 1947.
 2. Ibid : P. 99.
 3. The Arts of India and Nepal—The Nasli and Alice Heeramāneck Collection. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston 1966, p. 105.

6. The Śivopaniṣada manuscript
7. The Umottara or Uttorottara Tantra manuscript
8. The Varṣasāra saṁgraha manuscript

Of these only the Lalitavistāra manuscript contains a date corresponding to 1036 A. D. Other manuscripts accompanying it are also contemporary on palaeographic grounds.

The paintings on the bookcovers are, however, much later in style than the early 11th century Nepalese paintings. The miniatures on the bookcovers depict the episode of the *Lingodbhava-mūrti*. Inner sides of the book covers or the *Basā* are painted as is common to Nepalese art. On a white primed surface the drawings are made in ochre and filled in with the five primary colours. They are sharply and distinctly outlined with pigments of a deeper tone than those used in the main body of the painting. Modelling, however, is not very sharp. And this lack of enough modelling places the painting to a date later than 1036 A. D. though that date has been found in the Lalitavistāra manuscript. It shows very few of the Brahmanical themes done in Nepalese miniature style. Another Nepalese manuscript dealing with Hindu themes is the 12th century Hindu Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa manuscript on palm leaves from the National Museum, New Delhi (No. 62. 158). But the growth of a typically Nepalese style is, for the first time, felt in these miniatures. "The paintings, belong to the general type of Eastern Indian paintings. Nepal, though within the orbits of Eastern Indian tradition, developed certain individual peculiarities in course-of time; they are clearly apparent in these illustrations.¹"

A copy of the *Astasahasrikā Prajñāparamitā* dated 191 Nepal Era or 1071 A. D.² from the Asiatic Society of Bengal is another typical Buddhist manuscript with a profusion of miniatures. The importance of this manuscript is that its depiction of deities does not always correspond to their descriptions as given in their respective *Sādhana*s. The importance of this manuscript lies in the fact that it contains a profusion of illustrations of deities according to the Mādhyamika thoughts and as Smith says "being plainly labelled, as they are, of high archaeological and historical value."³ This is typical of the paper manuscripts, of this period and hence is of great help in reconstitution of the religious history of the period. Most of the deities, their attributes and associates, *Parivāra Devatā*s conform to the descriptions in the *Sādhana*s though exceptions are not rare. But we cannot agree with the latter part of the above sentence of Smith when he says that, "from purely aesthetic point of view are not of much account."⁴ For these are not only "the relics of an ancient school of Nepalese painting",⁵ but also are one of the

1. Mookerji, M : A painted bookcover from Nepal; J. I. S. O. A. ; , vol. XIV, pp. 100-101. 1946.

2. Foucher, E : Etude sur l' iconographie Boudhique de l' inde; J. I. S. O. A., Vol. III, 1953.

3. Smith, V : History of Fine Arts in India & Ceylon; Part II, Ch. XII, Tibet & Nepal, p. 165.

4. Ibid. 5. Ibid.

best specimens of the Pāla or Eastern School of painting in the 10th century. Modelling in colour is at its best and the employment of white paint for highlights on the face of Śyāma Tārā are truly in the tradition of classical Indian paintings of Ajantā.

The importance of this manuscript is enhanced by the labelled illustrations of deities associated with particular places sacred to the Māhīyamikas. But the "iconographic aspect of some of these require better study than has been hitherto bestowed on them."¹ The illustrations show main deities like Tārā and Lokéśvara in the company of their associates and thus enable us to ascertain the true relation between their Dhyāna and illustration which usually correspond to each other.

The *mantras* concerning the deities also determine the illustrations. Thus the *Mantra* "Om maṇi padmē huṃ" containing six syllables is represented by a new form of Lokéśvara called Ṣaḍakṣarī Lokéśvara who is flanked by Mañidhara and Sudhana. In a similar way the complete Tārā *mantra* consisting of ten syllables e. g., "Om Tāre Tuttare Ture Svahā" is represented by the entire Tārā Mandala consisting of the ten demigoddesses, Ekajaṭā, Aśoka-Kāntā, Jānguli, Mārīchī, Mahāmāyūrī and others while the shorter form of the same *mantra* which is minus the two syllables 'Sva' and 'Hā' is represented by only eight of the goddesses (Folio no. 119). The worship of Lokéśvara or Lokanātha might have been centred mainly at Champitalā (Champitalé Lokanātha Bhaṭṭāraka) while that of Śyāma Tārā (Samatātē Buddhariddhi Bhagavatī Tārā) at Samatāṭa and Māhaśrī Tārā was associated with Potālakā in Bengal (Potālaké Bhagavatī Tārā).

The uncommon types are represented by the *Yuganaddhva Mūrti* of Lokéśvara in physical union with his Śakti (Folio 185). "Representation of Halāhala with Śakti is very rare and probably this form is found here in this school of miniature for the first time."² But this becomes very common in later Nepalese manuscripts. From Nepal it might have travelled to Tibet where depiction of deities in a state of physical union otherwise known as *Yab-Yum* in Tibetan becomes very common specially in cloth scrolls and hangings. The depiction of *Prajñāpāramitā* or supreme knowledge personified is also an important feature of this manuscript. She sits with *Dharmachakra Mudrā* in *Virāsana* and is flanked by her natural complements Medhā, Mati, Smṛiti and Prajñā, two on each side. "Such figures of *Prajñāpāramitā* are very rare and as such have iconographic value"³ (Folio. 12 Rev.) The miniatures thus made it possible to depict entire Mandala which was rather difficult of execution on plastic medium.

1. Bhattacharya, B. : The Astasahasrikā Prajñāpāramitā; J. I. S. O. A., Vol. III, 1935.

2. Bhattacharya, B. : The Astasahasrikā Prajñāpāramitā; J. I. S. O. A., Vol. III, 1935.

3. Ibid.

The wooden covers of a Tāntrika manuscript, the Piṅgalāmata from the Durbar Library, Kathmandu is another important example of this group. But the freedom from the predominantly East Indian influence is gradually noticed, specially in the figures of the devotees flanking the Śivalinga. The Śivalinga with eyes depicted on it is also typically Nepalese and reminds us of the similar treatment on the tower of the Svyambhunāth temple of Kāthmandu. The long colophone runs as follows and the date corresponds to A. D. 1174 :

"Samvat 294 Chaitraśuklapurnamāsyām samadina uttara Phālguna nakṣatrē Śrī Paramēśvara Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Rudra Dēvasya vijayarāja śrimata vijayakarathyayam Śrī Chandana mandava pinathyasvivāsina Śrī Śivāchārya vijadhara bhashmena likhapitam lēkha Paśupatinā likhitam."

Hindu deities like Śiva, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Gaṇeśa, Kārtikeya and even the Śivalinga have been depicted which is of course very rare. Of these the representation of Gaṇeśa as a scribe is most important, since it is, according to Alice Getty, the oldest representation of Gaṇeśa in this form. The basically Indo-Mongoloid culture of Nepal has been aptly depicted by introducing two male figures in diverse types of headgears flanking a Śiva linga. One of them is typically Indian while the other has a Mongoloid bias though both owe common allegiance to one religious system, Hinduism. Drawing here loses the rhythmic treatment of the Eastern School and elements of the second phase of Nepalese painting are already noticed here.

The truly Nepalese idiom makes its debut in the manuscript of the Aṣṭasahasrikā Prajñāpāramitā from the Asiatic Society of Bengal (No. 4023) dated Nepal Era 268 or 1148 A. D. Illustrations are not many, of which mention may be made of the scene showing the Buddha discoursing about Sunyavāda in the company of Bodhisattvas, Arhats, Maitreya and Subhūti. Though ultimately derived from the Pāla prototypes the Nepalese manuscripts when they come of age, as in this example assert their characteristics. It becomes successful in its own way even though there is a great deal of desiccation in the colour modelling. This flat surface filled with paints is typically Nepalese. The Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay has an interesting Hindu manuscript of Dēvī Māhātmya belonging to the 13th century. The ground for the next stage of Nepalese painting is slowly being prepared.

Before we pass on to the next period of Nepalese painting a discussion of Pāla and Nepalese styles as well as their affinities will not be out of place.

The Pāla paintings were from illuminated manuscripts on palm leaves or later on paper and some times on wooden book-covers. The majority of illuminated manuscripts are of the Aṣṭasahasrikā Prajñāpāramitā but copies of the Pañcharakṣhā have also been found. Technically and stylistically the paintings from the book-covers and the folios are identical. But these are not true examples of book illustration. "Though they are generally paintings of Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna deities and shrines and are not connected with the text that

accompanies.”¹ Secondly, the deities are usually shown framed in trifol architectural niches. This, according to Basil Gray, suggests that the Pāla illustrations are graphic renderings of icons from contemporary shrines and temples.² A few examples viz., the Mrigasthāpana Stupa and the temples of Tārā and Lokanātha from Samataṭa and Champitalā illustrated in the *Aṣṭasahasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* manuscripts support the contentions of Basil Gray. Neither are the illustrations from Pāla manuscripts and book-covers real miniatures. They do not possess the characteristics of true miniatures that developed in Western India, Assam, China, Iran and Mediaeval Europe. In fact the Pāla paintings are murals executed on folios and in much diminutive dimensions. Though reduced in size they have the spirit and character of large paintings, specially murals. A miniature should have fine lines,—unbroken and sure, richness of decoration and should have a message to tell. But the Pāla examples on the other hand have all the characteristics of murals, viz., they are large in conception and modelling in colour as well as of the linear type are always present.

Pāla miniatures are not “originally decoratively associated with the script area but they occupy spaces left by the scribe to be fulfilled by the painter. The techniques are calligraphic. The draughtsmanship is usually strong and having regard to the material, fragile and soft palm leaf on which the drawing is made the beauty of line and colour evolves our admiration.”³ The miniatures illustrate the divinities of Tāntrika Buddhism. “Figures are extremely sensuous and even the male figures have feminine grace.”⁴

There are also wide technical differences between the Pāla and West Indian miniatures. Their similarities exist only in the use of palm-leaf, the miniatures not forming a decorative portion of the script, the representation of the scenes from the lives of the prophets and the depiction of Tāntrika deities evolved by the Buddhists and the Jinas. But there are more technical and other differences between the two schools of painting than their apparant similarities. In West Indian miniatures there is no attempt at strong draughtsmanship and angularity is an outstanding feature. There is constant break in the line and the drawing is usually careless.

In Pāla painting the figures were first outlined and then filled in with colours but in West Indian paintings the figures were first modelled in colour and then outlined. The final outlining in Pāla miniatures was done in deeper tones of colours of the figures but in West India black was the usual colour employed for the purpose.

1. Ray, N. R. : Bāṅgālir Itihāsa, Ādi Parva; p. 799.

2. Gray, Basil : The Development of Painting in India in the 15th Century. Marg. Vol. VI, No. 3. 1953.

3. Ghosh, A : Miniatures of a newly discovered Buddhist Palm-leaf manuscript from Bengal. Rupam; p. 78, 1929

4. Paul, P. L. : Early History of Bengal; pp. 127-'8.

Eyelids in the Pāla miniatures were shaded but this was not done in Western Indian paintings. "Pāla paintings are said to have certain features of contemporary life and manners of the people; but in this respect the Western Indian manuscript paintings offer us more and detailed pictures of contemporary life."¹ Some of the earliest and famous painters of the Pāla school according to the Tibetan scholar Tāranāth were Dhīmān and his son Bitpalo, and the style was continued till the early 17th century by Jaya, Vijaya and Parajaya.² Usually, the composition of Pāla miniatures follow a schematic principle of balance. In most of them the main figure is larger in size and is either placed at the centre or to one side. Figures are either seated or standing according to the dictates of the Sādhana. If the main figure is at the centre of the composition then the subsidiary and attendant deities flank him but if the main figure is placed at a side then the rest of the group occupy the other end of the composition. The background for the main figure is normally the *Prabhāmandala* which is either semi-rounded or elliptical in shape. The elliptical *Prabhāmandala* already makes its appearance in some late Gupta icons and sculptures. If the number of the *Parivāradēvatās* is large then the group is arranged in parallel rows either in a straight line or in a semi-circle. There are cases when the background from the main figure is an architectural niche or the outline of some famous temple or shrine. Perspective in Pāla miniatures is essentially linear as in Pāla plastic art. The "horror-vacuum" is equally noticed in these works. Every available space in a composition is filled in with flying divinities, vegetal, animal, architectural and geometrical shapes. The above traits were strictly prescribed for Pāla miniatures for about a couple of centuries beginning from the earliest available *Prajñāpāramitā* manuscript of 1015 A. D.

With the passage of time the mediaeval linearism also invaded the domain of Pāla painting. In spite of the greatly plastic character of Pāla painting, the later productions as well as copper plate engravings of the 12th century showed traces of the new trend. According to Dr. Motichandra in Pāla painting the "Linear conception however seems to have been borrowed from the Western school."² To quote Dr. N. R. Ray, the "beginning of the linear conception found its wide expression though in a few 12th and 13th century examples of drawing on copper plates found in the localities ranging from the Sunderbans to Chittagong we have some earlier versions, even earlier than those in certain Pāla miniatures.....It now appears that this linear art, wherever it might have originated, must have become an all India property of art conception, more or less in a developed form already by about the 11th and 12th century. Pāla and Sēna sculpture, however, kept itself almost untouched by this tendency, but Pāla

1. Motichandra : *Jaina Miniature Paintings from Western India*.

2. Heely, W. L. : *Extracts from Tāranātha's History of Buddhism; Indian Antiquary*, Vol. IV, p. 102.

painting could not, painting being itself two dimensional. The discussion of the mediaeval traits as appearing in the said copper plates will give us an idea of the trend of painting of later Pāla period."

Apparantly there is some similarity between the two schools from the eastern and western ends of India. The two traditions belong in the later period to the same "Mediaeval" conception yet the dissimilarities are many. The quality of lines in the two traditions is also different. The "Western" line has nothing but flat and hardened surface to control within its limits, but the Bengal line with its sensitiveness, tempered by lyricism and short or extended curves, as the case may be, shows off the roundness of the mass that is confined within its boundaries. "This eastern tendency continued in Bengal and Nepal and also in Bengal, Assam and Orissa till very recent times. This is the "Apabhramśa" element of Dr. Motichandra. According to him ".....in the 10th century or even a little earlier, the fresh conventions of Western India left their homeland and travelled to the remotest corner of India, influencing the Pāla painting in Eastern India and Nepal.....These traditions seem to have travelled with the advance of Rajput culture from Gujrat and Rajputana. As Apabhramśa became the common medium of literary expression in this age, so the linear conception of Western India school became the medium of artistic expression all over the country.....Henceforth the ancient art of Western Indian school loses its geographical connotation and merges into the general trend of the mediaeval Indian art."¹ A gradual shift towards the new idiom is seen in a chronological study of the Pāla manuscript.

These new elements have been described as "late mediaeval",² by A. K. Coomaraswamy which according to him are noticeable in the paintings of Nepal and Burma as well as in Pāla and Western India. But it is safer to call them "Mediaeval" than late mediaeval for even the latest of the Pāla paintings do not fall within the late mediaeval period of Indian history. Whatever is common in the Pāla and Western Indian paintings is commonly derived from the paintings of Ellora. But Pāla painting as compared to Western Indian painting maintained more of Classical elements and as a result we find that some of the Bengali manuscripts combine in them the best of Ajantā and Ellora traditions of painting. The Vredenburg manuscript is one of the finest examples of this group of paintings from Bengal.³ The real importance of Pāla paintings (including early Nepalese) was realised by early scholars like Coomaraswamy, Vredenburg and Sawamura. Coomaraswamy remarked that their "glowing colours and accomplished drawings lend to all these manuscripts a high aesthetic interest and their rarity a historical value." But Smith was a bit sceptical about

1. Motichandra : Jaina Miniature Paintings from Western India ; p. 21.

2. Coomaraswamy, A. K. : History of Indian & Indonesian Art; p. 114.

3. Ray, N. R. : History of Bengal; Vol. I, Ch. XIV, Sec. III, p. 533.

the worth of these. According to him these paintings were "the only relics of an ancient school of Nepalese painting. ... not of much account, ... from purely aesthetic point of view. Being plainly labelled they are of high archaeological and historical importance....."¹

Generally, the miniatures do not form an organic part of the script area. These are painted in the *Ālekhyā sthāna* left blank by the painters, "There is consciousness of the scales of the figures throughout in all the miniatures. The eyes are generally of the Padmapalāśa type, i. e., they have a downward pointing angle in the middle of the upper eyelids emphasising a downcast look."² Though apparently stereotyped the faces in the figures are individualistic and have characters. "There is a refined simplicity, dignity and restraint about them. The miniatures, specially those with crowded scenes.....come close to the dignity of mural paintings and serve us well as the only and indirect examples of contemporary mural painting to which Tāranatha had made mention."³ O. C. Gangoly is also of the same opinion. According to Vredenburg, "the easy and graceful attitudes, the treatment of the costume and personal ornaments, of architectural and vegetable forms, all agree strictly to the style of Ajanta."⁴

The mediaeval traits consisting of three quarter profile, excessively long and beak-like noses and stiff formalisation in the poses are noticable in manuscript of the later period like the *Prajñāpāramitā* book-covers from the Bharat Kala Bhawan, Banaras (No. 4794). The chin is curved as in Jaina manuscripts and the eyes also tend to become lozenge-shaped and even the farther eye has been depicted in this manuscript. *Mudrās* are skillfully used to show the mood of the goddesses and on the whole the entire group has the closest affinity with the figures on the Sunderbans Copper-plates. The figure of a beggar (4775) and that of a seated woman (4777) from the same manuscript hark back to the ideals of Ellora. Superimposition of planes was practised to show distance as in the case of the Sermon at Sārnāth scene (No. 4783). The linear treatment is farther seen in the figure of the flying divinity (No. 4778) in the episode of the Parilayavana Monkeys. (Pl. II) Continued narration and heiretic scaling were also followed as we find in the subjugation of Nalagiri (Pl. III) in this manuscript. The elephant is much smaller in size than the Buddha's figure because the latter is the centre of attraction in the composition. Double perspective was also attempted at necessary stages like the Mahāparinirvāṇa scene. (No. 4791) The reclining figure of the Buddha is shown in bird's eye view while those of the mourning disciples are in eye level view. But the "Classical" traits are

1. Smith, V. A. : History of Indian Art.

2. Tagore, Abanindranath : Indian Artistic Anatomy.

3. Ghosh, Ajit : Rupām; 1929.

4. Vredenburg, E. : The Continuity of Pictorial Tradition in the Art of India; Rupām Nos. 1-4, Jān.—Octo, pp. 7-II, 1920.

maintained in some of the faithful copies of the Pāla manuscripts even though they were copied in about 1300 A. D. A couple of such folios are at the Bharat Kala Bhawan showing Mahāyāna deities. Normally the late productions were more influenced by Apabhraṃśa painting. This tendency was seen till recent times more prominently in the paintings from the Western districts of Bengal which was actually a corridor between the sphere of Apabhraṃśa painting and Bengal.¹ Older manuscripts were often retouched at later dates thus betraying more than one style or script. A 13th century manuscript of the Pañcharakṣā was retouched in 1583 A. D. as we find from the post colophon statement in the manuscript from Heeramanek Collection. "The five pañcharakṣā goddesses are depicted and the fleeing figures of evils are interesting due to their unique way of illustration." "Another manuscript from the same collection dated 1234 A. D. is most profusely illustrated than is usual. "Even the margins and the areas around the punch holes are painted with figures and scrolls."²

The second period of Nepalese painting is represented by some manuscripts of which the book-covers 1265 A. D.; B. 15. A. S. B. and Pañcharakṣā, of the Veśvantara Jātaka of c. 1300 A. D. is interesting since it combines in itself the "Ajantesque" as well as the true Nepalese elements (Pl. IV). The Ajanta tradition is best seen in the treatment of the rocks, which not only supply the setting for the episodes but also separate successfully one episode from the other. These "colour prism" rocks are red in the centre while blue on the sides. The figure of the Bodhisattva, the profile of the horse and its neck and also the elephant's tusks, all repeat the curves that separate one episode on the book cover from the other. Both the "Classically Indian" and "Mediaeval Indian" idioms have appeared simultaneously on this important book-cover. In the matter of modelling it is typically Ajantesque while the pointed faces and flat surfaces though reminiscent of Western Indian prototype are originally derived from the Mediaeval Indian tradition of Ellora. The bodies are in a typically Nepalese manner. A peculiar tilt pervades the bodies from the hips upwards whatever be their position or attitude. Hence this group of miniatures clearly show that the purely Pāla tradition and ultimately the Ajanta tradition too was not completely given up by the early 14th century though, as we have seen the typically Nepalese idiom had already evolved and was established. For sometime direct contact of Nepal with Eastern India was snapped due to Muslim conquest of the latter area in the late 12th century A. D. But these Eastern Indian elements were brought to Nepal afresh by the refugee artists and scholars from Eastern India. In the 1265 A. D. manuscript of the Pañcharakṣā the quality went down considerably though the general trend remained vital. The early tradition is seen in the manuscript of Madhusena also.

1. The Art of India and Nepal : The Nasli and Alice Heeramanek Collection. p. 107. Boston, 1966.

2. *ibid.* : p. 107.

The new trend is best seen in the drawing of the manuscript of the *Nityāṅhikatilakam* from the Darbar Library, Kathmandu, dated 1395 A. D. Though not varied, the miniatures depict Viṣṇu on Garuḍa flanked by Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī, each complete with their attributtes. Apart from stylistic considerations, this manuscript shows the continuance of book-illustration in Nepal in the 14th century and the preparations for a new style. But yet it is not free from the East Indian influence, as we find "desiccated modelling of Indian origin blurs the clear and flat surface"¹ of the Nepalese miniatures. The other manuscripts in this style are manuscript No. 4203 of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (1148 A. D.) and a book cover of about 1200 A. D. Colour modelling from now on becomes dry and the lines too lose the free flux of the Eastern school. The "curves too become shorter and clipped. Sharp and hectic 'Western' lines and pointed angles also make their intrusion."²

In composition too we find a broken attitude and each figure seems to be separated from the other. Angles become prominent in the figures when shown in bent positions and they become erect and vigourous. But the themes and forms remain more or less Indian till the 16th century as we find from the manuscripts.

The book-covers No. 4813 and 4814 from the Bharat Kala Bhawan also show the same tendency as the above group and can be safely assigned to a period not beyond the 14th century. Though badly damaged the illustrations of the Buddha in *Dharmachakra Mudrā* and of other deities are interesting. Though colour modelling is almost gone and the figures are sharply outlined in black, the Buddha figure still shows the traditional *Padmapālāśa* eyes. The figure is set in a Chaitya window niche which perhaps represents some particular edifice of worship just as in Pāla art. The next figure is of a white complexioned male deity sitting in *Sukhāsana* pose holding a sword. He is Mañjuśrī. A rosette strewn background is typical of this book cover. Jewellery and ornaments are painted in a very thick paint thus giving an impression of their being gems.

The other book cover from the Bharat Kala Bhawan (No. 4814) shows an eight armed female deity whose attributes and *Dharmachakra Mudrā* make her Mārīchī. Of all her attributes only the bow and an arrow are clearly visible. Two of her hands are in *Bhumisparśa Mudrā* and resting on her lap respectively. Her other two faces are badly damaged. The central figure of a white complexioned male is interesting since the frontal pleats of his Dhoti still follow the swallow-tail type so common in the Maitreya figures from *Gandhāra*. The female deity carrying a *Vajra* and a mirror in her hand is badly damaged beyond recognition.

1. Kramrisch, S : *Nepalese Painting*; J.I. S. O. A. , Dec. 1936.

2. Ray, N. R. : *The Struggle for Empire*; Eastern India, Art, p. 694.

She might have represented goddess Vajrasatvātmikā. The Chaitya window niches are always supported on full blown lotuses.

Folios Nos. 4846, 4847, 4848 and 4849 of the Bharat Kala Bhawan open yet another vista on Nepalese painting. They are more Tibetan than Nepalese and this is noticed in the themes, execution of details and their jewel-like colours. The black folios have gilt letters and the *Ālekhyasthāna* is in the middle of the folio, bordered by red bands. The gods and goddesses of Mahāyāna and of Tāntrika affiliation have been depicted with great mastery and minutest details according to the *Sādhanas*. The general character of calligraphy is the same as that of the Manuscript No 214 of the Bharat Kala Bhawan. The colours are translucent and fresh while a free use of gold paint has been made of for the ornament of the deities.

The image of the ten handed Gaṇapati (4846) is according to the *Sādhanas*. The scarf ends fly upwards and end in swallow-tails. Another interesting illustration is *Parṇasavarī* (4847), the goddess of small-pox. As the name suggests she is clad in a skirt of leaves while the necessary ornaments are also depicted. She belongs to the *Akshobhya kula*¹ and hence is of yellow complexion with six arms and three faces. The deity in folio No. 4849 is six armed Mañjuśrī. His arms carry the following attributes, viz., top right hand carries a manuscript, middle right hand rests on his chest showing the *Sikshā mudrā*, bottom right hand rests on his lap carrying a *Ghaṭa* or pot, top left hand carries a spray of leaves, middle left hand is folded in a *Mudrā* bottom left hand is the *Bhumisparśa Mudrā*.

The stray folio No. 214 (Pl. V) of the Bharat Kala Bhawan is an interesting example of the late-Pāla style in Nepal. The folio is black and letters are in gold. The *Ālekhyasthāna* is rectangular and is at the centre of the folio. This rectangle projects a little upwards and downwards from the script area. The folio is numbered at the right with two punch holes instead of the usual one. Age has faded the colours greatly. A yellow male deity sits in *Yogāsana* pose on a full blown red lotus with a black centre. He is Vajrasattva, the priests of the five Dhyāni Buddhas.² His left hand rests on his lap in which he carries a *Ghantā* or bell. The other hand holding a *Vajra* rests at his chest. The body is erect but the head is tilted a little to the left. He is profusely ornamented and a narrow ribbon-like *Uttariya* drapes his body. The eyes are in the *Padmapalāśa* manner of the Pāla school. The Chaitya-window motif is preserved in the shape of the *Prabhāvali*. Being a late product there is practically no modelling but the outlines are very sharp and thin. Details are prolific.

An exactly similar manuscripts from Nepal has been described by Karl Khandavalala which is also assignable to the 14th-15th century period. Though a paper

1. Bhattacharya, B: Baudhdader Deva-Devi; p. 66.

2. Bhattacharya, B: Baudhdader Deva-Devi; p. 19.

manuscript, the folios correspond to the size of the palm leaves prototype. Decorative borders attain a great deal of importance at this period. Speaking of its excellent palette Khandalavala says that the "Colour scheme of our miniature is effective and its decorative charm in its surrounding of black and gold is undeniable despite the conventional nature of the composition."¹ In these paintings though the theme is stereotyped yet the continuance of some 12th century Pāla motifs is seen in these 15th century works. This is specially noticable in the treatment of the trees and the *Mudrās* of the deities.

Folios Nos. 4821, 4822, 4823, 4824 and 4825 are an interesting set from the Bharat Kala Bhawan. Though undated and clinging to Pāla traditions they unmistakably belong to a period when the Pāla epoch in Nepalese art had already been long over. The most unusual feature about this group of paintings are their covers. The wooden *Bāsās* or book-covers bind these folios. The top cover has five miniature metal Buddhas attached to it instead of the usual (Pl. VI) paintings. The end of each śloka in this manuscript is indicated by a small flower, drawn below the script area. A similar panel of Hindu affiliation also from Nepal has been located by O. C. Ganguly. It is a Viṣṇu Sitapaṭṭa representing Viṣṇu and his four *Vyūhas*. "The whole tablet is filled with five figures their intervening spaces being filled with decorations are enriched with all kinds of precious stones—corals, agates, green stones and leads of other varieties skilfully woven into a bright and shining pictorial composition in metal."²

The miniature in folio No. 4821 shows four faced and eight armed goddess Śītatāpatrā. The halo round her head is roundish like in Tibetan painting. Space for background is three quarter of the entire area and it contains typical Nepalese stylised mountains while the trees suggest the introduction of the Rajasthani phase. The representation of Mahāmantrānusarinī or Pañcharakṣhā is interesting from the iconographic point of view (4822). She is green complexioned, three faced and six armed. Seated on a full-blown lotus placed on a pedestal with a tapestry the picture is more Tibetan than Nepalese. According to the *Sādhana* she is represented here in Yoga pose. Her short bodice is peculiar since it resembles the breast place worn by Burmese and Siamese dancers and a nearest prototype is seen in the tunic of the Asuras in the Nepalese *Dēvi Māhātmya* manuscript from a later age at the Bharat Kala Bhawan.

The treatment of the background landscape is important in folio No. 4823. The four faced and twelve armed deity of red complexion is difficult to identify as it is in a bad state of preservation. Her four faces are yellow, green, red and

1. Khandalavala, K; Notes on a Nepalese Manuscript and Miniatures; Marg. Vol. IX, No. I.

2. Ganguly, O. C. : A unique votive tablet of Lord Viṣṇu with his four Vyūhas, Amrita Bazar Patrika. 28. 5. '67.

white from left to right. Only eight of her hands with their *Āyudhas* are identifiable. The left hands carry the bow, a *Kapāla* (skull), the *Pāśa* (noose) while the other shows the *Tarjanī Mudrā*. In three of her right hands she carries an arrow, the *vajra* and a *Padma* while her remaining hand shows the *Varadā Mudrā*. The deity is placed in a valley formed by four peaks and is surrounded by early Rajasthani or Malwa type of trees. The background is ash-blue. The different planes, viz., the foreground, and the horizon, are, however not sharply divided as in later manuscripts like the *Dēvi Māhātmya*. Goddess *Mahāmāyūrī* is depicted in folio No. 4824 and she is of a ruddy complexion. Her *Āyudhas* in the left hands are sword, a *Chakra*, (disc.) a *Maṇi* and the last shows the *Varadā Mudrā*. In the right are a *Chakra*, a *Bhringār* (water sprinkler), an ear of corn and a *Ghaṭa* topped by a bunch of leaves. The identification of the deity in folio No. 4825 is easier. The god is of the *Raudra* or fierce type and represents the terrible aspect. His four faces yellow, red, blue and white from the left to the right. He is clad in a tiger skin and tramples up on a pair of naked *Mithunas*. The upraised flame-like hair constitutes his halo. In his left hand he carries the *Chakra*, the bow, the *Triśula* and the *Pāśa*. The right hands carry the sword, an arrow, the sceptre (*Tarjanī*) and a red flower held at the chest. He is *Trailokya Vijaya* and he belongs to the *Akshobhya Kula*. The male and the female on whom he tramples are both white complexioned and hence they represent *Śiva* and *Gaurī* of the Hindu pantheon.¹ This manuscript (Pl. VII) is important being a bridge between the *Pāla* and the Rajasthani traditions, in Nepal.

The *Dēvi Māhātmya manuscript* from the Bharat Kala Bhawan, with its ten illustrations (4865-4874), is typical product of the *Nēwārī* group which is again a link between the Post-*Pāla* and the *Gorkhālī* styles in painting. The illustrations have many points of similarity with the earlier Post-*Pāla* style, and certain new elements are already taking shape. For instance, from now onwards we have a typically Nepalese landscape serving as the background of the paintings. This becomes a cliché with the Nepalese painters and are very frequently repeated even in the *Gorkhālī* period. The miniatures are still book illustrations and have an economy of expression as noticed in the *Pāla* miniatures. Since the achievements of the *Dēvī* are the main theme everything else is simplified and thus abstraction takes place. The towering personality of the *Dēvī* in her many forms attracts all our attention and the little space left is treated with sparing details of landscape. We find that the system of depicting a valley, probably the valley of Nepal itself, by means of only two or four isolated peaks around the general group has been established (folio 13. obverse). It had already appeared in the earlier period as represented by the folio No. 4823 of the Bharat Kala Bhawan. In our present folio the higher ranges are shown snow capped to add realism, though stylised, to the landscape in Nepalese miniatures.

1. Bhattacharya, B. : *Bauddhader Deva-Devi*; p. 50.

The figure of *Dēvī* is monumental and looks more like a cult image than a figure from a painting composition. Here, as in other folios of this manuscript she wears a "mystic and other worldly expression"¹ which is characteristic of Nepalese icons and painted representations of deities. The introduction of a princely human figure and that of an attendant at the bottom of the illustrations are an important idiom (pl. VIII). These figures are in the typically Rajasthani manner which is perfected in the *Tantra* manuscript from the Bharat Kala Bhawan, dated 1764 A. D. The successive illustrations are almost identical in as much as they depict the various forms of *Dēvī*. Folio No. 59 Rev. shows *Dēvī* in the form of *Kalyānī* vanquishing the demon *Sumbha*, while the painting no. 4865 depicts the killing of *Nisumbha*. In her *Kalyānī* aspect the goddess is assisted by *Chāmundā* (no. 4866). The next episode (no. 4867) of *Dhumralochana Vadha* is important. *Dēvī* on her lion swoops down as she shoots an arrow at the *Asura*. She rests on a clump of cloud with an upward pointing tail which becomes popular and common in Nepalese art. There is great motion in the forceful pose of the *Dēvī* and her lion. Both of them are bent forward. The *Asura*, hit at the chest somersaults in agony and is caught up in the flames produced by the arrow. Depiction of the flickering flames is in the typical Nepalese and Tibetan manner. (Pl. IX)

The succeeding illustrations also show the *Dēvī* in her other forms associated with the vanquishing of the various demons (Pl. X). In the episode of the *Raktavīja Vadha* (folio. 52, obv.) the mount of the *Dēvī* is a lion of white colour painted in the Nepalese manner. Her associate *Chāmundā* adds an eery spell to the composition with her long tongue, violent expression and flame like hair.

The last phase of Nepalese painting is best represented by the *Tantra* manuscript (no. 10054) from the Bharat Kala Bhawan, dated 1764 A. D. Its uniqueness consists in its being a typical example of the Gorkhali phase of painting in Nepal.

The entire manuscript consists of folios folded one upon another and bound or piled up. In this manner it resembles similar palm leaf manuscripts from Orissa and the *Parabaiks*² of Burma. The *Parabaik* is a kind of manuscript formed out of a very long sheet of paper folded backward and forward and thus giving the shape of a manuscript. Buddhist themes and *Jātaka* stories were the main topics depicted in this 19th century innovation in Burma. Its folios are made of thin boards prepared by pasting many sheets of yellow paper one upon another. The book covers are of brown leather. Beautiful floral borders decorate the folios. The five primary colours and their admixtures have been judiciously used. Gold paint has been freely used while a thick white

1. Mitra, A : *Bharater Chitrakala*; p. I.

2. U. Thein Hān; *Contemporary Burmese Art; The Perspective of Burma*; *Atlantic Monthly Journal*, p. 45.

paint represents pearls, jewellery and fingernails. The depiction consists only of grotesque *Tāntrika* deities with syncretic figures, and of the *Yantras* or ritual diagrams with their respective captions. The arrangement of figures, their forms and treatment are all very conventional and conservative. So much so that the illustration of goddess Vasudhārā is typically Pāla. The colophone reads Saṃvat 885, Magha i. e., 1764 A. D. and the patron is the ruling king Jaya Prakāśa Malla Dēva. This Jaya Prakāśa Malla ruled at Kantipur.¹ The era used here is the one started from 879 A. D. when Nepal threw away the Tibetan yoke. This date in the manuscript also coincides with the last date of Nēwārī rule i. e., 1768 A. D. The paintings of this style should be called as Gorkhālī because by 1764 A. D. Gorakhālī elements had gained ground and had ushered in a new era though the death knell of Nēwārī rule was sounded only in 1768 A. D.

Syncretic iconography is another of the characteristic of Nepalese miniatures. Apart from deities having multiple arms and heads we find them sometimes with animal faces also. The image of Tuṣṭa Kālī from the above manuscript shows her with ten heads of which only one is human while the rest are of various birds and beasts. The god Hanubhairava also has five faces, viz., of the Hanumāna, the horse, the bear, the wolf and the bird.

The treatment of Nature and its elements undergo a change in this manuscript but the fundamentally cosmopolitan nature of the Nepalese culture and art remains. The goddess standing in *Pratyāliḍhapada* pose is encircled by a fiery halo. Flames flicker upwards and are indicated in gold on a scarlet background. The sky is indigo blue. Clouds of a definitely Chinese type are shown piled up and overhanging. The various clumps of clouds are picked out in pale blue and gold lines on a white surface. The foreground is grass green. The leaf green background ends in hills with vegetation on them. At the back tall white tower-like members stand for the snowy peaks that surround the valley of Nepal. Thin gold outlined top sections represent the sun's rays reflected on the snowy peaks. The general undulating terrain is shown by means of curves drawn on the surface and topped and outlined by flowering shrubs.

In the *Tuṣṭa Kālī Yantra* we have representations of birds beasts associated with the deity, viz. owls, jackals and ravens. But their representation is conventional and toy-like. (Pl. XI)

Semi-divine portrait types are of some interest. They are naturally not photographic and as Ashok Mitra maintains these have a 'unworldly look' in their eyes. The representation of Kāmadēva and Kāmāvatī are typical of this group. They have well defined profiles with a sloping forehead. The nose is long and pointed, the lips well developed and the chin prominent. In this case it is remi-

1. Regmi, D. R. : Ancient and Mediaeval Nepal; p. 118.

niscent of the Western Indian type. Though otherwise similar, the face of the goddess Dhūmāvati has a masculine rigidity about it (D. 20).

Iconic as the representation of the deities is, they have a rigidity of expression and they affect formal poses. The goddess *Chinnamastā* is profusely decorated like a *Pratimā* or votive clay image of Bengal and there is a static frontality in her pose as in the Durga images of Java.

The nude has a prominent place in this Tāntrik manuscript. There are many representations of the same either in the case of deities, single or in a state of physical union. (Pl. XII) Other examples of the nudes are the *Mithunas* or couples which are shown with Tāntrik deities. The figures are all monumental in character whatever their sizes actually may be. They are strongly outlined but usually there is very little modelling on other parts of the body except the faces. Whatever modelling exists is linear in technique though in some cases attempts have been made with the *Khat pardāz* system. In the case of *Śaktis* in the *Yugalamurtis* modelling has been achieved by shading with ash-blue lines. This is most prominent around the chin, the eyes and along the jaw line. The effect is not happy. The too prominent blue lines become conspicuous and give the effect of downs or whiskers on female faces also. Thus the otherwise graceful faces of women are greatly marred by this technique of shading. (Pl. XIII)

Another point to note is that when a deity is claimed both by Buddhists and Hindus, the depiction is two fold, viz., according to the Buddhist *Sādhana*s and according to the Hindu *Dhyāna*s. The *Nēwār* community is divided into the *Śiva Mārgī* and the *Buddha Mārgī* sects. Goddess *Ugratārā* is one such deity. While depicted as a Buddhist deity she is flanked by her associates *Nīla Sarasvatī* and *Ēkajātā*. But in her Hindu form she has as her companions *Simhīnī* and *Vyāghrinī*, both good examples of syncretic iconography having the faces of the lion and the tiger respectively.

The landscape remains essentially the same as in the early period. The valley of Nepal is still a popular motif. But some minor changes and influences are discernible. Clouds now become of many colours and shapes. In the illustration of god *Hanubhairava* there is a water fall in the foreground. In between the two cliffs the space is painted indigo on which the depiction of water is in the Chinese manner and not in the usual 'Basket-pattern' of Indian origin. Sometimes the Indian type is also depicted. But never were the Chinese and the Indian types depicted together in the same illustration. It appears that the Nepalese artists were aware of the different origins of the two motifs and so never used them together. Even in the *Gorkhālī* period and in later times the painters always belonged to the *Nēwār* community. Though the above manuscript is a product of the *Gorkhālī* period its executors were *Nēwārs*. In both cases, however, white lines picked out the watery surface and its ripples on indigo background. The beauty

of the mountain passes leading to the valley of Nepal have been successfully brought and in the illustration showing Kamakala. It is treated in bird's eye view with the utmost economy of details. They pass winds through two undulating mountains while clouds overhang. Purple clouds are shown towering up against the snowy peaks on the other side of the valley. The effect of depth is quite successful in this illustration.

The painting captioned Śrī Nepalapitha is more like a diagram or map of the valley of Nepal and the various places of pilgrimage within it. On a number of concentric circles are arranged minute figures of gods and goddesses according to their situation and location around Kathmandu. This depiction is very similar in spirit with those of the holy places of India as found in the Tīrtha Kaumudī manuscript (1668 A. D.) from Assam.

King Jayaprakāśa Malla Déva (1732-71 A.D.) is shown worshipping. His patronage to religion, religious institutions and also to art and painting is well known. Since he gained success due to the grace of goddess Gūjhéśvarī and defeated the pretender of Kāntipur he had ghāṭs and temples made near the temple. Gūjhéśvarī was worshipped as a well with eight silver lotus petals around the mouth. Three kalasas of gold, silver and crystal were also used for the ritual. He repaired the foundation of the Taleju Temple and renewed the principal timber of the Svayambhu-Chaitya (A. D. 1751 started and completed in 1758)¹

The scene of worship depicted in this manuscript might be that of goddess Gūjhéśvarī for here too the object of worship is a *Kalasa* profusely laden with *Haras* and jewels (Pl. XIV). A golden crown tops the *Kalasa* which in its turn rests on a *Simhāsana*. Three golden poles emerge from the *Simhāsana* and are joined at the top forming an arch. The entire framework is topped by *Chattravali*. The caption at the bottom is a four lettered word ending in 'śvarī', the first two being indistinguishable. They evidently form the name of the deity,—Gūjhéśvarī. The treatment of landscape in the background is typical of Nepalese manuscript painting of the period. Jayaprakāśa Malla's is a perfect portrait of a devoted Hindu king. He sits in worship with folded hands and seeks the blessings of his patron goddess. The costume type, the sharp profile and the intent large eye all go to make it a work of the Rajasthani school which had been established in Nepal by the end of the 18th century. The treatment of facial hair and whiskers is very fine and deft. There is some amount of modelling on the face too. (Pl. XIV)

The scene of the great *Purusa* being greeted by gods and demigods is interesting from many points. Here we have the representation of the *Vidyādhara*s in the typically Nēwārī manner more frequently met with in the *Toraṇās* or cloth

1. Regmi, D. R. : Ancient and Mediaeval; p. 138.

scrolls from Nepal. The pair of Vidyādhara kneel on clumps of cloud with a tail. The Vidyādhara showers flowers, the Vidyādhari holds a garland in her outstretched hands. They look downwards with excitement and joy. The sky is a deep indigo blue with stars indicated as golden dots. Their faces are in strict profile and appear like true portraits. In another scene they are shown playing on an orchestra consisting of drums, pipes and small brass cymbals.

The depiction of a female deity from this manuscripts shows how great was the influence of Pāla painting on that of Nepal even as late as the 18th. century. It not only influenced contemporary art of Nepal but even remained as the traditional and national form of art, slightly changed, however, with the passage of centuries. The four armed deity sits in *Sukhāsana* on a full blown lotus. Her body though frontal is slightly bent to the left in conformity with the Pāla and post-Pāla Nepalese idiom. This has been noticed even in the *Gandavyūha* manuscripts of the 11th century. Even the *Trivalī* at the waist and the *Padmapā-lāśa* eyes with downwards pointing pupils are not neglected. Dressed in the conventional way she carries in her left hands a white pigeon and a white lotus while in her right ones she has a blue lotus and an ear of corn or *Mañjarī*. Her complexion is yellow. She is thus, when referred to the *Sādhana*s, none but the Buddhist goddess *Vasudhārā*¹. The caption at the bottom also identifies her with the same deity. She has a circular halo but an elliptical *Prabhāmandala* frames her figure. But changes have also crept in the style and technique in general. Colour modelling is completely absent, which is the greatest break from the Pāla tradition.

Treatment of animals as we have already found in the case of the *Tuṣṭa Kālī* *Yantra* is conventional. In another case also we find them toy-like and forms evolved out of diverse national styles, all however incorporated in Nepalese painting. They are all together in the folio showing the bear, a fish, a tortoise and a snake in connection with the depiction of the various *Avatāras* of Viṣṇu and the nether regions according to Hindu conception. The snake with its scaly body and beady eyes is Chinese. More so is the fish (associated with the *Matsyāvatāra*) which has large fins and long whiskers like that of a gold fish in Chinese and Japanese paintings. But the tortoise (associated with *Karmāvatāra*) is typically East Indian. Its colour scheme and beaked mouth is just as in the *Tirtha Kaumudī* manuscripts (1668 A. D.) and the *Gīta Govinda* (1714-244 A. D.) manuscripts from Assam. Another manuscript of Tantrik nature from the National Museum, New Delhi, also shows the similarity of animal forms. The cows are here exactly in the manner of those of the *Tirtha Kaumudī* of the Darrang School, of Assam. The various oceans or nether regions also betray the motifs of diverse origin used as in the above case. *Pātāla* is depicted as a sea with a blue surface with Chinese type of waves and ripples as described earlier. The others, i. e., *Rasātala*,

1. Bhattacharya, B: *Bauddhader Deva Devi*; p. 69, 79.

Mahātala, Talātala and Bitāla have different colour schemes as well as group of meandering lines in different forms. But Sutāla, the last but one region is typically Indian with the 'basket pattern' on a chocolate background. Another region, Sudhamālā is again in the Chinese manner. A similar manuscript from the Bharat Kālā Bhawan of the *Parabāik* type is of our interest due to its late date. It bears the date 1988 Vikramī corresponding to 1931-'32 A. D. In spite of its lateness, it is typical of the early 18th. century folded manuscripts like the one belonging to the days of Jayaprakāśa Malla Déva described above. Apart from finished paintings on one side of the folios there are many sketches of Yantras and Chakras as well as painted specimens of the Gūjhyā Kālīkā Yantra. The painting is typically *Nēwārī* and akin to the *Toraṇa* paintings. Since there is no human portrait, the Rajasthani element was not used and thus *Nēwārī* element dominated in the illustrations of gods and goddesses. Nothing special is noticed in this manuscripts regarding style or technique in spite of its 20th century origin. In every respect it is a work of the 18th century. Chinese elements are seen in the dragon-like lion depicted on many occasions. The Indian 'basket pattern' watery surface also continues. Some of the paintings in this manuscripts are intensely erotic in nature, and they show the different gods and their *Śaktis* in erotic embraces. In one instance they are in a very unusual state of union. The pair stand in an embrace, the Dévī with her back towards the viewers. She places her left foot on the lion and with her right leg she clasps the waist of Śiva. Five-headed Śiva rests his feet on the Dévī's lion and his own bull. The entire composition is framed by an aureole. In the treatment of the eyes the Padmapālāśa type is still followed though there is a lot of change in the details. Iconographically it is identical with Plate No. XIII.

"Perennial traits of Nepali form are transmitted accross the centuries. An illustration of the late sixteenth century may retain all the essentials of a composition created more than half a millenium earlier' yet be alive."¹

Whatever traditionalism and classicism is continued and maintained in the above manuscript is thrown away in the painting from the Bharat Kālā Bhawan, termed the "Dévī Ārādhanā" (no. 1032) (Pl. XV). It is a product of the 18th century and represents a quite distinct art tradition which was ushered in since the Gorkhālī period. Though apparantly of the Rajasthani type, the ultimate deviation from the *Toraṇas* is unmistakable as is seen in the composition and arrangement of figures. The long and narrow area greatly restricted the achievement of depth in this painting. As a result, all the devotees, divided into two groups, sit one behind the other in a single row. The illustration shows a group of devotees worshipping and making offerings to a

1. Kramaisch, S. The Art of Nepal, p. 43, 1964.

Saktist deity. The group consists of five ladies, two princely figures, a youth and two boys. The setting is architectural and the plantain trees peeping from beyond the walls of the courtyard is another Rajasthani element. The figure of the goddess is placed on a lotus which is cushioned in a clump of cloud. The goddess affects the *Dharmachakra Mudrā*. This again is a reminder of the Pāla-Nepalese motif of *Tantrik* origin.

The faces of the figures are all in profile. Females have small rounded foreheads, large eyes, full faces and lips, sharp but small noses and round chins. With all the above characteristics and their brushed back hair and pointed chignon they are very similar to the portraits of *Āhom* royal ladies in *Garhgaon* paintings from Assam (1734-44 A. D.). The general characteristics of Eastern Indian paintings continue inspite of political changes which hindered the easy communication between the component regions. The faces of women also have resemblance with Deccani paintings from Bijapur particularly with that of *Rāginī Trivēnī* from the *Bharat Kala Bhawan* (no. 199). Men have longish faces with large expressive eyes and pointed noses having a slight tendency towards a hook. Their faces are half-way between true portraits and the conventional faces from Nepalese scroll painting.

The *Dēvī Ārādhana* piece represents the last phase of Nepalese miniature painting. But the true *Nēwārī* style with a little admixture of Rajasthani elements held sway over the manuscript paintings which however declined with the introduction of the printing press in India and then in Nepal.

Being on the cross roads Nepal had absorbed some extreme elements in her painting also. It is hard to explain the origin of such elements as are seen in a book of fables in the *Bharat Kala Bhawan*, Varanasi. It is a paper manuscript with writings in the 12th century Nepalese script but paintings are quite exotic in nature. The elements correspond to later day Tibetan paintings. In one case a hare is seen seated on a mound in the company of a tiger, a mouse, a yak and a cock. The trees at the background are varied and their gracefully curved trunks make them appreciable. Clumps of clouds converge from both sides towards the centre and our eyes are drawn towards the curious assembly below. Colours are translucent and jewel-like. (Pl. XVI). The animals have a faint resemblance with their prototypes in the *Lava Kushar Yuddha* manuscript from Assam (early 18th century). The manuscript also contains an interesting representation of *Dhyāni Buddha Akṣobhya*, against a white mountaneous background evidently representing snows. (Pl. XVII). The blue complexioned Buddha sits in *Bhūmisparśa Mudrā* but surprisingly enough is depicted in the nude with no indication of the monastic robe. The mountain rises tier upon tier in graceful curves with indications of clouds and waterfalls between the cliffs. The Tibetan idiom is most pronounced in this composition.

Another isolated example of a fairly late pair of wooden book-covers again betrays exotic elements. The long panels have wide fret-work design borders as in Tibetan art. The panels are divided into three medallions of Persian derivation. In the top panel is a longish Mihrabi design wherein two fierce jackals chase each other. These two are arranged in a circle formed by their incurved bodies resulting in a never ending chase. The side medallions contain figures of flying hawks. (Pl. XVIII.). The spaces in between are filled in with foliage of Persian derivation as seen in the 18th Assamese art. The central panel in the book cover from the bottom has a pair of fighting hares amidst Persian foilage. The subsidiary medallions here are also filled in with floral designs (Pl. XVIII.).

Of the type of architecture at the contemporary times we have no idea derived from the specimens from Nepal, but examples of wooden architecture and we can easily conjecture that such illustrations were found in Nepal. The only point of which we can be definite is that the margins of the illustrations which are usually leaf-shaped (D. I.), semicircular (Pigmalion's manuscript 1174 A. D.) or in the shape of Chhatra windows are the representations of niches in contemporary architecture in which the various icons were kept in places of worship as in the case of Pala miniatures from Bengal. An interesting specimen of a niche where the Chhatra window niche has been bounded by two mouldings, an arch and a leaf-shaped one is found in a Buddhist manuscript dated to the 12th-14th century period from the Bharat Kala Bhawan (P. no. 4813-14). The wall behind is painted with single flowers all over. Ribbon-like streamers are attached to the top of the arch from which they radiate to the two sides and are fixed to the wall at some distance (D. I.).

The most important source of our information on the life and culture of the Nepalese people are the Tawari or the painted banners from the 16th to the 18th centuries. But contemporary manuscripts even when profusely illustrated with 2D and Tawari scenes do not offer as much information as these fields as do the Tawari. Being conventional and religious they do not get a free play in depicting contemporary ways of life. From among a large number of such manuscripts of this period only a Tawari manuscript from the Bharat Kala Bhawan (No. 4813-14) shows the typical Nepalese Stupa that had evolved after many changes in its evolution. The manuscript is dated 1821 A. D. but since it is a faithful copy of the original manuscript of the earlier periods we should take it as a reliable representation. The Stupa is depicted in the illustration of the Bharat Kala Bhawan (P. 4834). It has a high base and a semicircular band topped by a square flambur. A distinctive feature of the Stupa is the tall conical spire with horizontal bands. It eventually evolved from the

CHAPTER III

MATERIAL CULTURE AS REVEALED IN THE PAINTINGS

Manuscripts illustrations of the Pāla and post-Pāla periods from Nepal are mainly icon paintings. The illustrations are of the different Mahāyāna and Tāntrikā deities in very conventional poses as conceived in their *Dhyānas*. As a result their scope is very limited and they and their surroundings and backgrounds are also stereotyped.

Of the type of architecture of the contemporary times we have no idea derived from the specimens from Nepal, but examples of wooden architecture, and we can easily conjecture that such illustrations were found in Nepal. The only point of which we can be definite is that the margins of the illustrations which are usually leaf-shaped (D. I.), semicircular (Piṅgalāmāta manuscript 1174 A. D.) or in the shape of Chaitya-windows, are the representations of niches in contemporary architecture in which the various icons were kept in places of worship as in the case of Pāla miniatures from Bengal. An interesting specimen of a niche where the Chaitya-window niche has been bounded by two mouldings, an arch and a leaf shaped one is found in a Buddhist manuscript datable to the 12th-14th century period from the Bharat Kala Bhawan (F. no. 4813-'14). The wall behind is painted with single flowers all over. Ribbon like streamers are attached to the cusp of the arch from which they radiate to the two sides and are fixed to the wall at some distance (D. I.).

The most important source of our information on the life and culture of the Nepalese people are the *Toraṇas* or the painted banners from the 16th to the 18th centuries. But contemporary manuscripts even when profusely illustrated with Śākta and Tāntrikā episodes do not offer as much information as these fields as do the *Toraṇas*. Being conventional and religious they do not get a free play in depicting contemporary ways of life. From among a large number of such manuscripts of this period only a Tāntrikā manuscript from the Bharat Kala Bhawan (Nos. 4877-92) shows the typical Nepalese Stupa that had evolved after many changes on the Indian originals. The manuscript is dated 1931 A. D. but since it is a faithful copy of the typical manuscript of the earlier periods we should take it as an authentic representation. The Stupa is depicted in the illustration of the *Gūjhyā Kalikā Yantra* (F. 4884). It has a high base and a semi-circular *Anda* topped by a square Harmika. The distinctive feature of the Stupa is the tall conical spire with horizontal bands. It eventually evolved from the

numerous Chattrāvalī that topped the Stupas and his associated with Burmese and Nepalese Stupa architecture with the Bhutanese Chorten showing a family resemblance.

A fairly accurate idea of architecture is found in the (manuscript no. 1032) *Dēvī Ārādhana* manuscript from the Bharat Kala Bhawan, datable to the 18th century. In it a royal family is shown worshipping the *Dēvī* in the inner court of their dwelling. The place is between two pavillions or Kausis (D. 13) as they are called in Nepal. They are topped by square minarets or *Dharērās* and there is a dome at the centre. They have overhanging sloping Chajjās and the pillars are very slender with beautifully carved capitals but have no bases. There are niches with trifoil arches on the inner walls of the pavillions. The floor of the pavillion to the left is paved with black, yellow and red slabs while that of the other is of pointed brick bordering the flowered tile floor. At the left corner is a flat roofed building with two small structures on the roof. On the other end is a temple-like structure of red brick and has a white fluted dome topped by golden *Kalāsas*. The entire complex is surrounded by a red brick wall (Pl. XV.).

The Vessantara Jātakā Manuscript representing the earlier type shows a procession consisting of horse drawn carriages. The horses are properly decked with beads and the carriages are brightly painted (Pl. IV.).

The deities are always represented in early manuscripts as sitting or standing on elaborately carved and painted wooden seats often in the shape of the *Viśva Padma* or two full-blown lotuses joined back to back (D. 3a). These seats are spread with brightly coloured and patterned clothes. The *Dēvī Ārādhana* manuscript shows an interesting type of three-legged stool with a hexagonal top. The legs are curved and inlaid with jewels. A typical Tibetan style parasol has been depicted in the illustration of the Buddhist goddess Pañcharakṣā in the manuscript no. 4821-'25 of the Bharat Kala Bhawan (D 2). The *Āyudhas* of the deities are too stereotyped to need any mention. The deficiency of informations and illustrations of the accessories of daily life in other manuscripts of the 18th century are amply substituted in the *Tāntrika* manuscript dated 1764 A. D. from the Bharat Kala Bhawan (No. 10054). This particular manuscript is as informative as the *Tānkās* and *Toraṇas* are for a study of Nepalese material culture. It not only gives us an idea of the elaborateness of the rituals as well as the large variety of artistic metalware that were produced. The finely carved Damaru-shaped seats of the deities still continue as a motif and the base has deeply cut lotus petals (D 3). The ritual vessels as shown in the illustrations are heavy and finely chiselled. A lamp stand (D4) with five lamps is very fine in design whereas the incense burner has a wreathing serpent as its handle (D 5). The spout of the tall water vessel is an elephant's head with the trunk upraised (Ds. 6a, 6c). The large platter and the cups (Ds. 6b, 7) resemble the Assamese Bāns and are finely

carved. A more intricate type of water vessel is held by the Vidyādhara hovering in the sky. They also play on the orchestra consisting of the drum, a pair of small cymbals and a pair of trumpets joined together to a pole. The drum appears to be a *Dholak*, (D. 8), the cymbals are the *Bābhus* (D. 8a) and trumpets are made of metal (D. 8b). The *Vīṇā*, known as *Bin* in Nepal is shown as being played up on by goddess *Mātangi* (Manuscript 10054).

It is far easier to study the evolution of religion and rituals by a study of the manuscript illustrations. They provide us with an almost uninterrupted graphic account. The earliest Nepalese manuscripts the A-15 (1071 A.D.) of the Asiatic Society of Bengal and the Camb. Add. 1643 show the hold of Mahāyāna Buddhism in the early mediaeval period in Nepal. But the worship of these deities never ceased in Nepal. Only from time to time the discovery of a few manuscript illustrations of Hindu deities and of the Buddha image also testify to the prevalence of Hinduism and *Theravāda* Buddhism in Nepal. The *Astasahasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* (1071 A.D.) manuscripts shows the hold of the Mādhyamika School of Buddhism. *Ṣaḍakṣarī Lokéśvara* was worshipped in the company of *Mañidhara* and *Ṣaḍakṣarī Mahāvidyā*. In folio no. 129 of the A-15 manuscript another group of deities have been depicted of which the one at the centre is *Champitalé Lokéśvara Bhaṭṭāraka* which has been established by N.K. Bhattasali and Stella Kramrisch.¹ This is one of the 108 names of *Avalokiteśvara*. The deities that flank him are perhaps *Sudhana* and *Mahāśrī Tārā*. *Lokanātha* flanked by *Sudhana* and *Hayagrīva* are represented in folio no. 143. *Halāhala Lokéśvara* in the *Yuganaddha* aspect or in the embrace of his *Śakti* have been shown for the first time in painting in folio no. 185. Folio no. 119 presents the most interesting group of deities of *Tārā Mandala*, goddesses of different temperaments propitiated for different purposes. The presiding deity is *Śyāma Tārā*. Goddesses that are worshipped with the various aspects of *Tārā* are *Ēkaḥaṭā*, with a fierce look, having blood shot eyes and she carries a deadly *kartarī* or a curved knife. Others are *Aśokakāntā* carrying a bunch of *Aśoka* leaves, *Jāngulī* carrying a snake and *Mahāmāyūrī* a peacock tail. Goddess *Prajñāpāramitā* the, patron deity of Supreme Knowledge is worshipped along with her associates *Prajñā*, *Médhā*, *Mati* and *Smṛiti*, the four natural compliments to supreme knowledge (folio 12). "The paintings were produced in a period when *Tāntrism* of the Buddhists was a living religion, when the Buddhist artist knew exactly what liberties could be taken with the descriptive *Dhyānas* while painting the deities in accordance with the *Dhyānas*".²

Tāntrik tradition continues in Nepal and we find deities like *Mañjuśrī* and *Mārīchī* depicted in the Ms. no. 4813-'14 from Bharat Kala Bhawan. In a 14th century manuscript (Ms. no. 214) from the same museum *Vajrasattva* is depicted who

1. Kramrisch, S. : J. I. S. O. A. Vol. III. 1935.

2. Kramrisch, S. : J. I. S. O. A. Vol. III. 1935.

according to the *Sādhana*s is the priest of the five Dhyāni Buddhas¹. Another manuscript of the same period (No. 4846-4869) of the Bharat Kala Bhawan shows Gaṇapati and thus we are introduced to a period when the assimilation Mahāyānism and Hindu Tāntrism began, leading to the gradual absorption of the former by the latter. Goddess Pārṇasavarī of the *Akṣobhya Kula* is also represented in the same manuscript. The importance of a suppressed creed has been reflected in the conception of new deities by the Mahāyānists to show the wishful triumph upon Hinduism. Trailokya Vijaya was one such deity represented as trampling upon Śiva and Gaurī. One of his rare illustrations are found in the Manuscript No. 4821-'25 of the Bharat Kala Bhawan. Other lesser known deities represented in the said manuscript are Sītāpatrā and Mahāmantrānusārīnī.

The prevalence of Hinduism in Nepal side by side with Buddhism is supported by the discovery of the Pingalāmata Ms. dated Nepal Samvat 294, i.e., 1174 A.D. and the Nityānhikatilākam Ms. dated 1395 A.D. The former is more profusely illustrated than the latter. "The wooden boards contain six illustrations of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva, Gaṇeśa, Kārtikeya, and a Śiva linga. On either side of the Śiva linga there are representations evidently of votaries with two different kinds of head dresses which probably indicate their nationality. One has a sort of a cap used in Nepal, and the other a *Mukuṭa* which may lead us to think he is an Indian.² (D 16). Pārvatī has been depicted along with Śiva while Gaṇeśa is depicted as a scribe. According to Alice Getty it is the oldest known representation of Gaṇeśa as a scribe. The Nityānhikatilākam manuscript from the Darbar Library, Kathmandu proves the prevalence of the worship of Viṣṇu along with his two consorts Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī.

Of all the branches of Hinduism Śāktism and Tāntrism were the chief of Nepal Brahmanism. Manuscripts in the style of Manuscript no. 10054, dated 1764 A. D. from the Bharat Kala Bhawan show that during the rule of the different *Nēwārī* dynasties Śāktism flourished and numerous aspects of the Dēvī were worshipped in conjunction with Tāntrika rites. But we have reasons to believe that the worship of the Dēvī was as flourishing in earlier times, though unfortunately no manuscripts anterior to the 17th century have been available. Śākta manuscripts in the same style were produced as late as 1931 A. D. as represented by the Manuscript no. 4877-92 from the Bharat Kala Bhawan. The worship of Śiva who is the Bhairava of the Dēvī also continued and Paśupatiñatha is one of the greatest Saivite pilgrimages in the world. An illustration from the same manuscript shows king Jayaprakāśa Malla of Kāntipura (1732-'71 A. D.) worshipping the deities Gūjrhēśvarī and another god (Pl. XIV). The god is represented as a jewelled crown and the goddess as a golden Kalasa heavily laden with gold neck-

1. Bhattacharya, B: Bauddhader Deva-Devi; p. 19.

2. Bagchi, P. C.: Some Brahmanical Miniatures from Nepal; J. I. S. O. A., Vol. V, pp. 18-20, 1937.

laces and garlands. A crown tops the *Kalasa*. Both the deities rest on golden *Simhāsanas* with two golden poles forming an arch above them and topped by *Chattrāvālīs* and flying streamers. King Jayaprakāśa Malla was a great devotee of goddess Gūjheśvarī for he gained Kāntipura after worshipping her. "The Rājā in return for the favour which he received from Gūjheśvarī built Ghats and houses around the temple. A great patron of religion, he built and repaired many temples. Gūjheśvarī was worshipped as a well with eight silver lotus petals around the mouth. The *Kalasa*s of gold, silver and crystal were also used for the ritual. He repaired the foundation of the Taleju temple and renewed the principal timber of the Svyambhu Chaitya (A. D. 1751 started and completed in 1758 A. D.).¹" Religion thus prospered with royal patronage from pious rulers like Jayaprakāśa Malla. The various other aspects of the Dēvī were equally popular. Apart from the usual *Daśamahāvidyās*, several evolved forms like Tuṣṭakālī, Ugrayoginī, Ugratārā and Vasudhārā were also worshipped. Of those the last two are definitely syncretic deities being adopted from the Mahāyāna pantheon. The Yuganaddhva aspect or the one in which the Dēvī and her presiding Bhairava are shown in a state of physical union also make their appearance. Kāmadēva-Kāmavati and Śrikantha-Kāmakalā are two such forms illustrated in the present manuscript. That Nepal was growing in importance as a place of pilgrimage for Śāktas and Śaivas as well is seen in the diagram of all places of pilgrimages in Nepal with the Paśupatinātha at the centre. *Simhini* and *Vyāghrinī*, the two Tāntrika goddesses had for their faces those of a lioness and a tigress respectively. They have been illustrated as the associates *Ugratārā* in her Tāntrika form while in her Mahāyānist form she has been shown flanked by Nīla Sarasvatī and Ēkajatā. A copy of the Dēvī Māhātmya (Manuscript No. 48740) in the Bharat Kala Bhawan is contemporaneous with the manuscript described above. Even the King's portrait has unmistakable identity with that of Jayaprakāśa Malla. It shows that the various aspects of the Dēvī were not only worshipped but the episodes connected with each aspect were fairly current in Nepal as seen from the illustrations from the same. The aspects of the Dēvī depicted are as follows. As Kātyāyanī she kills Sumbha while for the annihilation of Raktavīja she is assisted by the fierce Chāmundā. She is also Kalyānī as well as the vanquisher of the demon Dhūmrālochana. The latest manuscript of this group dated 1931 A. D. also shows many aspects of Śakti with her attributes and associates specified for each episode.

1. Wright, D : History of Nepal; pp. 137-'8.



CHAPTER IV

COSTUME AND JEWELLERY AS DEPICTED IN THE PAINTINGS

The history of costumes in Nepal as found in the miniatures can be divided into the following periods, viz.

1. Pāla period; 8th-12th centuries A. D.
2. Post-Pāla period : 12th-14th century.
3. Nēwārī Period : till 1768 A.D.
4. Gorkhālī period : since 1768 A.D.

In fact the earliest available examples of the Pāla miniatures come from Nepal, e.g., in the manuscript Camb. Add. 1643, dated 1015 A.D. The costume type depicted in this group of paintings continues till the 14th century although the typically Nepalese type already makes its appearance to some extent by the 12th century.

In the first period the Buddha and his associates were the most popular subjects for painting and as a result the costume type was stereotyped and conventional and followed the description of the Sādhanas. Thus they were not true to life. But mortals were also represented. The first point that strikes us is the scantiness of dresses worn not only by males but also by females. For this we must bear in mind the statement of N.K. Bhattacharya that "Cloth was dear and hence clothing scanty" (Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum; P XX (A)). The tropical climate of Bengal was responsible then as now in keeping costumes to minimum but at the same time with an eye towards decency and modesty. Since the early Nepalese paintings were dependent on Pāla standards in all aspects we find the costume type of tropical Bengal transmitted to the valley of Nepal with an Alpine climate. The deficiency in clothing was compensated by the use of a profusion of jewellery both by men and women.

The Buddha was the object of devotion and the most popular subject of painting. The Prajñāpāramitā manuscript from the Bharat Kala Bhawan (no. 477-'93 and Ajit Ghosh collection (c. 1100 A.D.) depict the Buddha in vermillion coloured Saṅghātis which were either round necked or left the right shoulder bare. In the Bharat Kala Bhawan manuscript Nanda as well as Rāhula are also shown in round necked Saṅghātis and have conical top-knots like the Buddha. But in some cases the top-knot is also depicted as snail-shell curls. The Buddha is shown

with elongated ear lobes which became one of the Mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇas. "Though it was the custom to elongate the earlobes by weighing them down with heavy ornaments the Buddha is never shown with any ornament whatsoever."¹ In the case of the blue complexioned *Akṣobhya* a white Tilaka decorates the centre of his forehead (Manuscript no. 4795, Bharat Kala Bhawan). The Bodhisattvas, Maitreya and Hindu deities like Indra and Brahmā (Ajit Ghosh Collection, c. 1100 A. D.) show the actual male costume of the time in all its gorgeousness and sophistication which was the legacy of the Pāla period (Pls. Ia, Ic.). Contemporary literature also supports the refinement and luxurious life of the people.

The chief male dress was the Dhoti which served as the lower garment while the upper *torso* was generally left bare. "The present day standard of a Dhoti five yards long and 44 inches broad was unknown. The standard in pre-Mohammadan days would appear to lie nearer 3 yards by 22 inches for the males.....In the case of males about half this length is taken around the waist from right to left and fastened on to it like a belt by the action of the elasticity of the abdomen. The free end of this portion is tucked up between the legs and fastened behind on the border of the fold encircling the waist like a belt. This portion is called *Kāchā*. The other half of the cloth is folded into folds about 3 inches wide, and suspended in front. This portion is known as *Kochā*. The garb of the males in pre-Mohammadan days appears to have been worn in similar fashion, only with a shorter cloth."² The designs on the male and female clothing are interesting studies and testify to a flourishing state of the weaver's art. Line designs were common but floral and other designs are also met with in the paintings. The striped textiles are still popular in the rural areas of Eastern India as well as in Nepal where there is a strong substratum of Tibeto-Burman population. According to N.R. Ray the striped textiles should ultimately be connected to the Central Asian tribes who invaded and populated these areas in many ages. In the figure of Avalokiteśvara from the *Prajñāpāramitā* book-cover (Bharat Kala Bhawan, nos. 4774, 4792), we find one of the best representations of male waist cloth of the Pāla period. Some other equally beautiful specimens are found in the figures of a deity from the *Prajñāpāramitā* dated c. 1200 A.D. (Bharat Kala Bhawan 4843), the Bodhisattvas from the *Prajñāpāramitā* book cover dated c. 1400 A.D. (4795, Bharat Kala Bhawan) and Viṣṇu from the Sundarbans Copper Plate (1195 A.D.)

Headgears seem to have been less in use. But divinities are invariably shown with *Mukuta*s or tapering gold crowns often inlaid with jewells. Some males (Bharat Kala Bhawan no. 4774) are shown with crowns and circlets also though it was more common to females. In the manuscript from Ajit Ghosh collection

1. Bhattasali, N.K. : Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures In the Dacca Museum; pp. Introduction.

2. Bhattasali, N. K. : Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum pp. Introduction.

(c. 1100 A.D.) Viṣṇu has been shown in his typical *Karanda Mukuṭa*. But the deity in *Prajñāpāramitā* (Bharat Kala Bhawan 4774) has the *Jaṭā Mukuṭa* or matted top knot and a circlet is seen round the *Jaṭā Mukuṭa*. The hair of a deity from the same manuscript. (Bharat Kala Bhawan no. 4778) is upraised and flame-like. He is perhaps Hayagrīva. Hairs of deities usually come down to the shoulders in thin long curls from beneath the tapering *Kiriṭi Mukuṭas* as in the case of Viṣṇu from the Sundarbans Copper Plate. Decorative loops or the fillets are seen above the ears.

"Necklaces were also used by males but they were restricted to two only. They include one short necklace of pearls or other material of similar beady-appearance, then an inflexible thick flat band."¹

The *Prajñāpāramitā* manuscript from the Bharat Kala Bhawan illustrates both these types (nos. 4843, 4795). The second variety is still in use among the rural women of Bihar. The ears were weighted down and elongated and were decorated with ear ornaments of various sorts. "The usual were large circular pendants. Males generally used smaller ones but sometimes used pendants as big as those used by ladies."² Sometimes deities other than the Buddha were also shown with pierced and elongated earlobes without any ornaments (Bharat Kala Bhawan no. 4774). From the earliest to the very late products of the Pāla school of painting depict the large circular ear ornaments for men. Sometimes those were studded with jewels. The usual pattern was one in the middle and one in each cardinal point. Manuscripts nos. Bharat Kala Bhawan 4843 of c. 1200 A. D., and 4774 & 4794 of c. 1400 A. D., show this type of ear ornaments. Another manuscript shows a male deity with the sacred thread across the bare chest. Deities are invariably shown with *Valayas* or thin bangles at the wrists. Waistbands and girdles were also worn by males which were many stringed and were made either of gold or of beaded materials like pearls.

Sometimes particular deities were shown in tiger skin waist-cloth since it was laid down in the *Sādhana-mālā* (Bharat Kala Bhawan, nos. 4778, 4789). A very interesting study of a male with an emaciated body possibly a beggar is depicted clad only in a *Kaupina* or loin cloth (Bharat Kala Bhawan, nos. 4775, 4784, 4786, 4790).

Female costumes and modes of personal decoration in the Pāla period had been more elaborate as compared to those of males. Thus we come across a series of female figures in the miniatures steeped in sophistication and resplendent with grandeur comparable only to their counterparts in the Gupta period. The

1. Bhattachali, N. K. : Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures from the Dacca Museum, Introduction, xxxii.

2. Bhattachali, N. K. : Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum; Introduction, xxxii.

principal item of their costume was a coloured and horizontally striped piece of cloth wrapped round the waist. It has been described by Bhattasali as the *Sārī* though there are reasons to believe that it is not true. The dress in Pāla miniatures was basically different from the normal *Sārī* of today, as is the manner of wearing each of these. "At present the *Sārī* goes round the waist like a petticoat and no portion is left to serve as the *Kāchā* as in the case of males. The rest of the *Sārī* covers the upper portions of the body and ultimately also serves as the veil to cover the head. The *Sārī* by which the ladies are represented in these stone images are found covered appears to have been of different nature. At first sight they look like petticoats but careful observation reveals the fact that they are not so. For,.....the *Sārī* does not cover the front like a flat piece but goes round the legs and exhibits their contours. It will further be observed that while the outer corner of that portion of the *Sārī* which meets the leg in left and right angle to the leg, the inner corner is drawn up, suggesting tucking up between the legs and fastening of both the ends behind like a *Kāchā*. This is suggestive of the South Indian fashion of wearing the *Sārī*..... That the cloth was tucked up can also be proved from the *Sārīs* with line designs worn by many ladies. It will be observed that the lines do not run continuously as they would have done in the case of the *Sārī* were worn like a petticoat and lay like a flat flap in front. The lines on both the legs follow the contour of the leg they cover and are finally drawn inwards and upwards..... Sometimes only the left and was allowed to hang loose in folds on front."¹ Bhattasali's conjecture holds good in some particular cases as in the miniature of Green Tārā from the Manuscript No. A-15 from the Asiatic Society of Bengal, and also in the case of the sculpture of Manasā from Rajgir. But there are cases specially in the standing representations of goddesses that the costume is exactly like a *Sārong* with horizontal stripes. This is the dress in which the ladies of Ajantā, Ellorā and Bāgh have been represented. Numerous images of bronze, stone and miniatures from Eastern India depict the same costume specially during the Pāla period. Remnants of the dress in question still survives round Bengal proper, viz. Koch Bihar, Tripura and Chittagong in Bengal and among the Hindu as well as tribal women of Assam and Manipur. The *Fāriā* or the lower garment of the Nepalese women is also the same. It is thus hard to believe that the *Sārong* was not used in Bengal in the Pāla period. Bhattasali's conclusion that it was not a petticoat only because the front was tucked to the waist at the back after it was passed between the legs also does not stand on much solid ground. Even today women of Western India who wear *Ghagrās* or skirts tuck up the front of their dress at the back for quick movement and safety while at work. Thai and other South-East Asian women whose dress is also the *Sārong* manage their dress in a similar

1. Bhattasali, N. K : Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum; pp. Introduction xxxi.

way when freedom of movement is needed. Finally, how can we call a garment *Sārī* if it does not conform to the description of a *Sārī*? A *Sārī* is supposed to cover the upper part of the body also. But in the Pāla miniatures ladies are always shown either bare chested or with breast bands and the *Āñchala* of the *Sārī* never covers the bosom. The use of a *Stanapetta* or the scarf would be superfluous in the presence of an *Āñchala* as is the case in present day Bengal. The costume of Pāla ladies is not a *Sārī*, for, it conforms neither to the rural style of Bengal nor to the modern urban way, a style which is of Andhra origin. Women as well as men wore their dresses below the navel in the Pāla period.

Womens' upper garment was very scanty. Sometimes the bodice is also seen. The bodice is observed here as a tight fitting garment with short sleeves ending in frills and "stopping midway between the breasts and the navel. Sometimes it covered the navel" (D. 18)¹. But most common was the breast band or the *Urñā* or the *Uttariya*. The covering in general use, however was a narrow long piece of cloth. It covers the left breast completely and the right only partially. We find the description of the *Urñā* in the Śloka no. 35 of the *Pavanadūtām* by Dhoyi, one of the five great poets at the court of Lakṣmaṇa Séna. In representations of females in action the knotted *Urñā* is shown restraining the breasts. Govardhana, the great poet from the court of Lakṣmaṇa Séna refers in his *Āryā-Saptasāī* to the knotted *Urñā* in the following lines :—

“*Avadhidināvadhijivāḥ prasīda jīvantu pathikojanajāyāḥ*
Durlanghyavartma śailau stanau pidhehi prapāpali.”

A copy of the *Prajñāpāramitā* manuscript dated c. 1300 A. D. (no. 4861) from the Bharat Kala Bhawan and another manuscript (no. 4844) of a Buddhist text show a deity and goddess *Jāngulī* respectively bare breasted in the fashion of the day.

The usual female ornaments consisted of the *Nūpura*, anklets, many stringed girdles and bracelets. Bracelets are “barrell shaped extending over four or five inches of span beginning at the wrists.”² These resemble the *Gām-Khārus* of present day Assam which are still used on ceremonial occasions. A miniature from the *Prajñāpāramitā* manuscript from the Bharat Kala Bhawan (no. 4844) shows a goddess with a multitude of fine bangles on her forearm beginning at the wrists. *Keyrūas* or armlets were in the shape of a floral disc strung in a thin band or chain. “Females used one short necklace of pearls, or other material of similar beady appearance, then an inflexible thick flat band, and finally a flowing long necklace falling gracefully over and beyond the bosom.....”³. The most common type of ear ornaments were the pair of large flat

1. Bhattasali N. K., *Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum*, p. xxxi.

2. *ibid*—p. xxxii.

3. *ibid*—p. xxxiii.

ones, circular in shape, generally set with jewels; (Bharat Kala Bhawan no. 4794) In another manuscript dated c. 1500 A. D. a goddess is shown with a Kundala shaped like a hoop made out of a broad flat strip of gold.

Hair style of the period is also varied. But the commonest style was a loose bun at the nape of the neck. The usual form of hair dressing in Bengal and Assam conforms to this style. Females used gold crowns and circlets and their coiffeur was often decorated with flowers and jewellery. The crown of the goddesses in the *Prajñāpāramitā* manuscript (Bharat Kala Bhawan no. 4794) are of fine workmanship and have triangular members attached to the band. The coiffeur of goddess *Ēkajaṭā*, as her name suggests is a single topknot. All the hair is brushed upwards and made into a neat and shapely bun. This is identical with that of the Khampti women of N. E. F. A. and those of Burma.

Cosmetics were freely used as we find from the many miniatures of the period. Eye brows were made to appear arched to a great degree by artificial means and the use of *Kājal* is clear from the long collyrium line at the end of the eyes. Tilakas were generally round shaped and of red or white sandal paste. But these were also made tapering like a flame as in the Ms. no. 4861 from the Bharat Kala Bhawan. Lips too were dyed either with vermillion or lac dye. Nose ornaments which are of Semitic origin are naturally not depicted in these miniatures of the pre-Islamic period. The soles of the feet were dyed with *Lakṣārāsa* or the present day *Āltā* and we see it in the illustration of a goddess in a *Prajñāpāramitā* ms. from the Bharat Kala Bhawan (No. 4844).

The coiffeur and jewellery of some of the nude goddesses of a terrible nature are interesting to note. A typical ms. from the Bharat Kala Bhawan dated c. 1300 A. D. depicts many such goddesses including *Chandālī*. They are all identical and are wearing ornaments and no clothing at all, *Chandālī* is seen in a top-knot and a long *Mundamālā* reaching down to the knees (no. 4853). Her ears are weighted and elongated in the prevailing fashion. But goddess *Bétālī* has a luxurious growth of hair hanging loose at the back reaching down to her waist.

No where in *Pāla* miniatures are depicted footwear. Since the secular scenes were not popular and the Sun god has not been depicted we have no idea of the kind of shoes worn in those days.

The *Pāla* standards continue in Nepal till the 14th.—15th. centuries though degenerate forms of it continue for a much longer period. But by the 12th.—13th. century the indigenous elements raise their heads. The first thing to note is the change in the shapes of the crowns and tiaras of the deities. Their designs become simpler as compared to true *Pāla* examples. The upright members of the tiara become simply triangular in shape. It is in the *Pingalāmata* manuscript (1174 A. D.) that we first come across a typically Nepalese headgear (D. 16) shown in contrast to the Indian *Mukuṭa* worn by another devotee flanking the

Śivalinga. The costume type like the style of painting however remained common for Hindu and Buddhist manuscripts. Two other important Hindu manuscripts are the *Nityāṅhikatilakam* from the Durbar Library, Kathmandu and the *Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* (12th. century) from the National Museum, New Delhi.

The typically Nepalese costumes are found more in the *Toraṇas* of the 17th. century since the *Sādhanas* and iconography tied the hands of the manuscript painters. Life of the common people hardly found a place in the essentially theological mss. But some of the *Nēwārī* mss. offer us some vista on the contemporary costumes of Nepal. Of them the *Durgā Saptasatī* from the Bharat Kala Bhawan, two *Tāntrik* mss., one from the Bharat Kala Bhawan (1764 A. D.) and the other from the National Museum, New Delhi (17th. century) depict the gorgeous costumes and jewellery popular in this period. The *Durgā Saptasatī* manuscript. (no. 4874) shows the *Dēvī* in many aspects according to the *Dhyāna*. The basic dress is a heavily patterned and gorgeously coloured *Sarong* (Folio. 13 obv.). This is the *Fariā* of the Nepalese women (Pl. no VIII, D. 18). It is not stitched like the *Mékhēla* of the Assamese women. It is a length of coloured and patterned cloth secured round the waist while the front hangs in pleats. The blouse is always tight and short reaching only to the bust. The sleeves stop a little above the elbows. The Cholo or the present day blouse of the Nepalese women differs greatly from the example in the manuscripts. The present type not only reach down to the waist but also has full sleeves. But in one manuscript from the Bharat Kala Bhawan (no. 4822) the blouse is unusual and exotic. It has no sleeves and is too short even to cover the bust fully of goddess *Pañcharakṣā*. The only parallel of this Cholo can be found in the breast plate worn by Thai and Burmese dancers. *Uttariyas* are also used but they leave the chest bare in the traditional Indian manner.

The *Śarī* is also shown, though very restrictedly. It is a true *Śarī* since one and the same cloth is used for covering the upper torso. The *Śarī* is shown in the case of *Pañcharakṣā* (4822) and the *Fariā* in the case of *Śītātāpatrā* (4821). In one and the same manuscript the costumes are shown together. Even when the *Śarī* is used a *Dupāṭṭā* is also used (4870).

Coiffeur is elaborate and tastefully decorated in these miniatures. The pointed bun is the commonest type which is surmounted with a jewelled tiara as in the depiction of the *Dēvī* in her *Kalyāṇī* aspect (4866). But the hair style of goddess *Dhūmāvātī* in the manuscript No. 10054 of the Bharat Kala Bhawan is very interesting. She has her hair loose which hangs at the back and a garland of beads surrounds the crown (D. 20). The Assamese *Bhāgavata* of 1765 A. D. also shows the similar hair style. Some times deities are shown in unusual and bizarre costumes as laid down in their *Dhyānas*. *Parṇasavarī* (Bharat Kala Bhawan no. 4848) is clad only in a skirt of leaves while an *Uttariya* leaves the

chest bare. Chāmundā wears tiger skin skirt, a garland of skulls and a profusion of jewellery (4866). The popularity of pearls and other beady materials as seen in the Nēwārī paintings are a true record of the national taste, for, even today beads of various sizes and shapes are most popular among the Nepalese and other Himalayan peoples. Some goddesses are Ghora or terrible in nature whose hair rise high up like flames on the head. This variety is described in the texts as the Urdhvapingalakéśā. Ugratārā is another deity of this group and is grotesquely dressed in an elephant skin cloak round her person (Manuscript no. 10054 of the Bharat Kala Bhawan).

Jewellery remains essentially the same for gods and goddesses. These include the usual *Mukuṭa*, *Kundalas*, *Hāras* and flat necklaces (Ds. 22, 23), beaded girdles (D. 18) several strings deep, barrel shaped bracelets (D. 24) set with pearls, armlets, bangles, and *Nupūras* for the feet. Greatest details are found in the manuscripts no. 10054 from the Bharat Kala Bhawan (Pls. XI-XIV), in the images of the Dēvī and her associates. The *Mukuṭa* becomes elaborate but is modelled on the Pāla line. A number of *Kalkā* (Paisley) shaped members line the tiara while pearl strings hang in scalloped designs on the forehead. Small flag-like members project at angles of 45 degrees from both ends of the tiara (D. 19). Even when in the nude the Śaktis are shown fully ornamented. Of these only a few ornaments are still being used by the Nepalese. The circular ear ornament is called *Sun*, small *Kundalas* as *Mundri*, necklace as *Phuli*, and bangles as *Bālās*. The *Tilaharī* is a necklace of beads with a *Mridanga* shaped pendant. This type of necklaces are also very common in Assam where they are known as the *Dholbiri*. (D. 17).

Costumes of gods are comparatively simpler as seen in those fashioned by Baṭuka and the Vidyādhara. The only dress material is a knee length patterned Dhoti and the bare chest is hung with *Uttariyas*. The usual ornaments are supplemented by the *Kalli* or heavy gold anklets. They have well trimmed and twisted moustaches also. Soldiers' battle dress is seen in the representations of the demons Raktavīja, Dhumralochana and others. The armour of Raktavīja is a sleeveless quilted tunic with a round neck. Two wing like members curve upwards from the shoulders and the dress looks like the breast-plates worn by South East Asian dancers. A short frilled skirt is attached to the waist of the tunic. (D. 14, Pl. IX). Dhumralochana wears typically Nepalese trousers or the *Surwāl* which is of a flowered material and tapers down to the ankles. The helmet or crown of the demons have a *Chaitya-window* type front elevation. The sides come down to the ears to protect them (D. 15, Pl. X). Male deities also wear flat circular ear ornaments (D. 21).

Actual 17th.-18th. century male costume is seen in the portrait of king Jayaprakāśa Malla Dēva (1764 A. D.) and of the prince and the priests from the

Durgā Saptaśatī manuscripts. The king is dressed in the contemporary north Indian court costumes which had already reached as far as Assam. It consists of a long sleeved striped and flowered *Jāmā* and *Paṭukā* evidently of brocade. The turban resembles the *Safā* and is not *Chajjédār* which was in fashion at that time in North India. Ornaments worn by him are also typical of the period. The turban is decorated with jewelled pins and brooches and a black feather. Earrings are large with a red bead strung between two white ones. From a black velvet band hangs a 'dhol' shaped pendant of gold. Kaḍās round the wrists and rings on the fingers have no special features to mark. Whiskers and moustaches are well trimmed and a caste mark decorates his forehead. (Pl. XIV). A simpler and different caste mark is seen on the forehead of the prince from the *Durgā Saptaśatī* manuscript. Mutton-chop whisker are also to be met with in the illustration of the king (Pl. VIII). In the same manuscripts, the priests are clad in *dhōti* and *Uttariya*. His hair is done in a top knot with a small white rosary around it. The beard is trimmed to a point and rosaries of Rudrākṣa are worn at the arms and round the throat.

Contemporary female costume is seen only in the Folio. 1032 of the Bharat Kala Bhawan (Pl. XV). The illustrations of the ladies worshipping are interesting as they represent the true Nepalese style. The ladies are clad in coloured *Fāriās*, full length blouses of striped materials and transparent *Dupāṭṭās*. The head is never covered. The entire hair is done in the typical East Indian manner, brushed back and done into a neat bun at the back of the neck. A single white flower is tucked in the bun. Ornaments consist only of the *Bālās*, pearl necklaces and dumb-bell shaped ear ornaments of gold like those of the Mikir people of Assam.

Children were also as well dressed as the grown ups, specially among the princely classes. The little boy here is clad only in a *Jāmā* or a frock-like dress. Older boys and youths are dressed like men in *Jāmā* and *Izār*. But all have closely cropped hair and are bare headed. Small *Kundalas* or *Mundris* and *Hāras* are their only ornaments. Since they are worshipping they are all bare foot and hence footwear is not represented in this painting.



GLOSSARY

Babhu	A pair of small bronze cymbals.
Bāsā	Wooden book-covers.
Bin	The Vina or the lyre.
Bohāl	A traditional centre of learning.
Chitrakāra	A painter belonging to the Newār community.
Cholo	Full-sleeved blouse of Nepalese women.
Dharérā	An architectural member like a minaret.
Dholak	A wooden drum played on both sides.
Fāriā	The skirt-like garment of Nepalese women.
Gātā	Book-covers.
Kalā Pustaka	An illustrated manuscript.
Kalli	Bangles.
Kholā	A valley.
Mundri	A pair of small gold earrings.
Pothi	A manuscript.
Pustaka	
Phuli	An ear ornament.
Sun	Large disc-shaped ear ornaments set with with jewels.
Surwāl	Man's tight pants.
Tār	Table-land.
Tol	A traditional centre of learning.
Tilaharī	A three-stringed necklace.

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Pl. I (a) Adoration of the infant Buddha by the Devas. Painted book Cover. 1028 A. D.
Prof. S. K. Sarsawati Collection, Calcutta.



Pl. I (b) Mahāyāna Deities. Painted book cover 1028 A. D. Prof. S. K. Saraswati Collection, Calcutta.

Plate No. 1 (c): Adoration of the infant Buddha. Painted book cover. Circa 11th century A. D. Nepal.



Plate No. II : Monkeys offering honey to the Buddha. Circa 11th century A. D. Nepal.



Plate No. III (a) Subjugation of Nalagiri Illustrated manuscript folio. Eastern India. Circa 12th century A. D.





दक्षश॥७०॥

विश्वामित्राय

संज्ञावत्कस्यद्विगशवनयाहिन

॥ज्ञानमात्राद्यावावात्राद्विगशवनयाहिन

॥अथबल

॥नक्षत्रादि

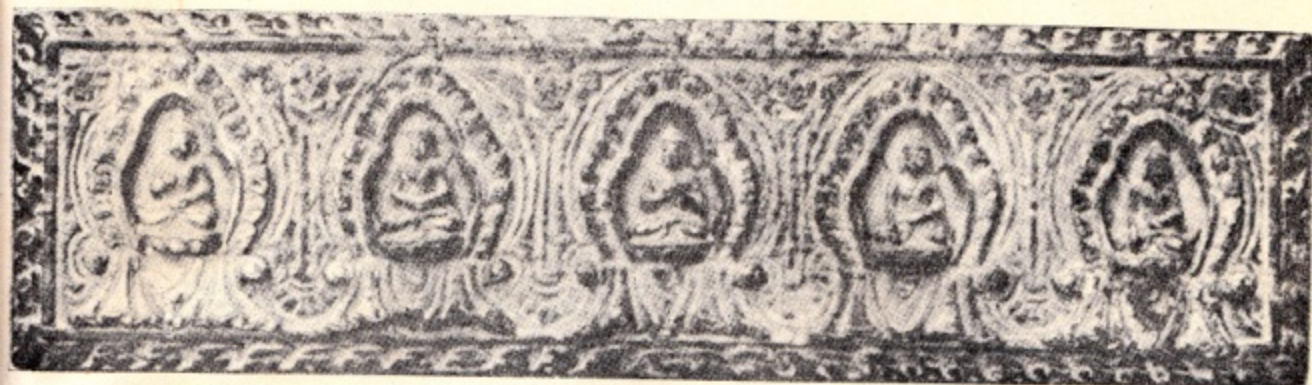


Pl. IV. Painted book cover with Vessantara Jātaka scenes. c. 1300 A. D. National Museum, New Delhi.



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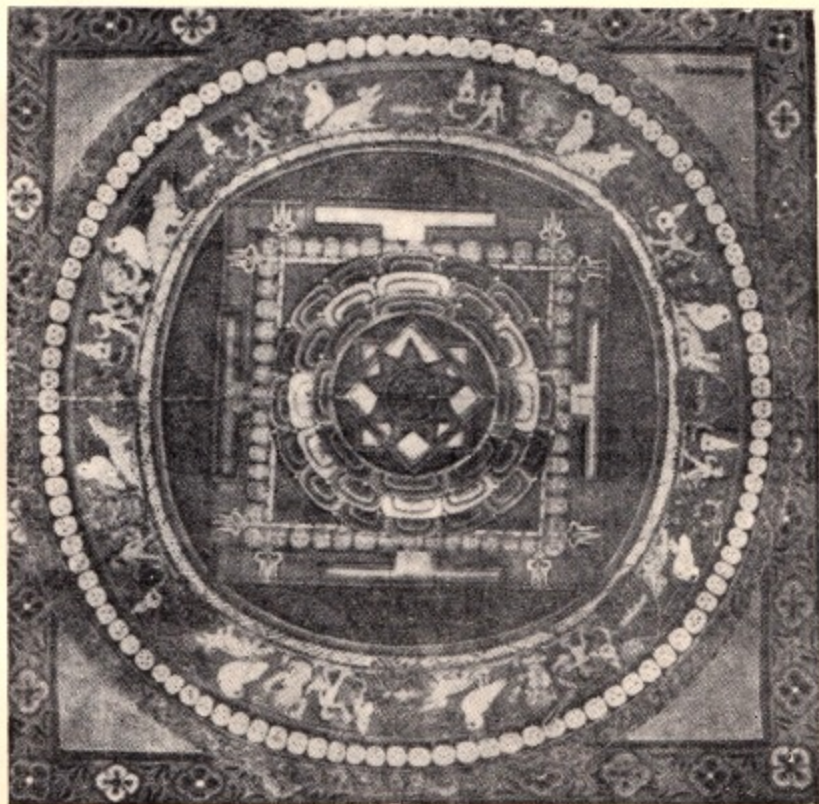
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Bharat Kala Bhawan, Varanasi.



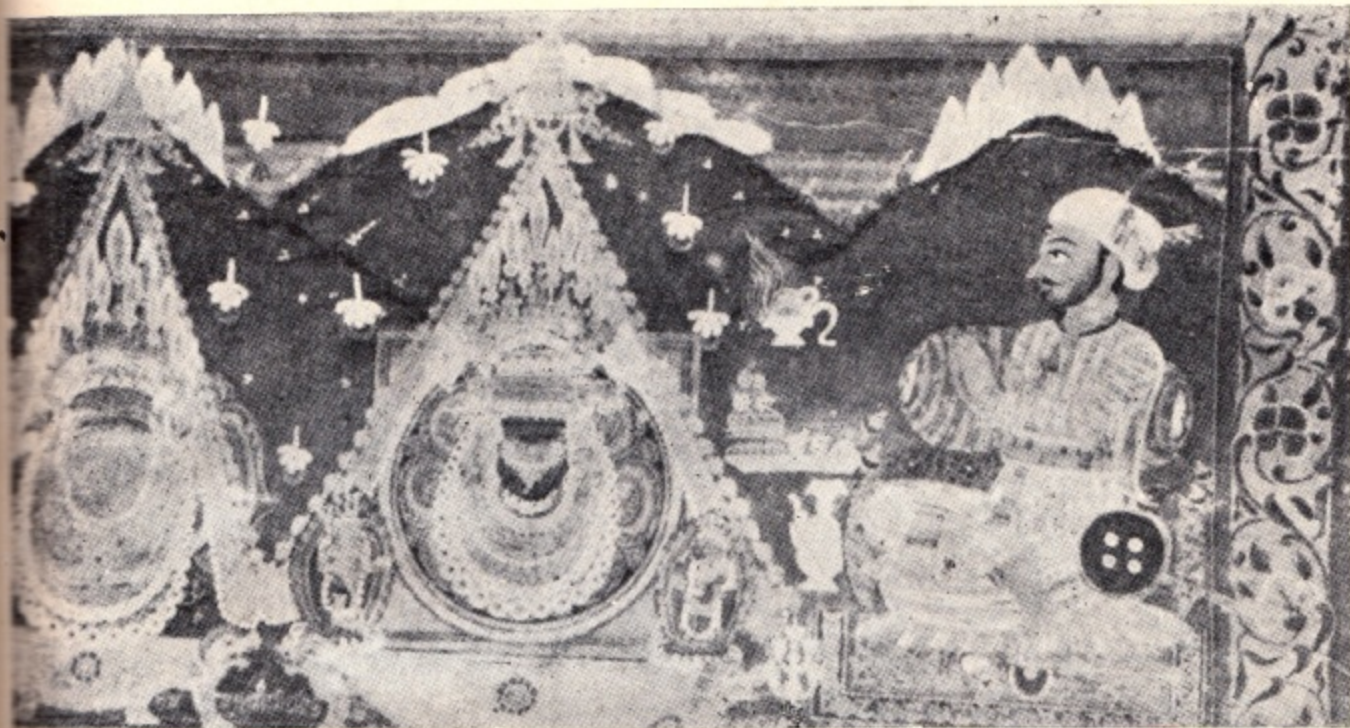
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Pl. XIV King Jayaprakāśa Malla. Tantra Manuscript 1764 A. D. Bharat Kala Bhawan, Varanasi.



Pl. XV Royal family worshipping Devī, Book Cover Bharat Kala Bhawan, Varanasi.



Pl. XVI Assembly of animals Illustrated Paper Manuscript Folio.
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Pl. XVII Dhyañi Buddha Akṣobhya, Illustrated Paper Manuscript.
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Pl. XIII Book Covers with paintings of animals. Bharat Kala Bhawan, Varanasi.

